

**HARVARD HISTORICAL MONOGRAPHS**

**II**

**PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT  
OF HISTORY FROM THE INCOME OF**

**THE ROBERT LOUIS STROOCK FUND**

**LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD**

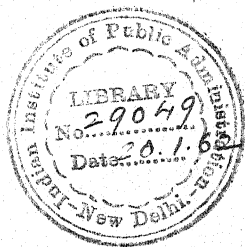
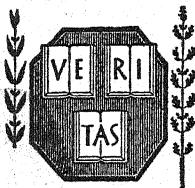
**OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS**



# The Private Record of an Indian Governor-Generalship

*The Correspondence of Sir John Shore, Governor-  
General, with Henry Dundas, President  
of the Board of Control*  
1793-1798

*Edited with an Introduction and Notes by*  
**HOLDEN FURBER**



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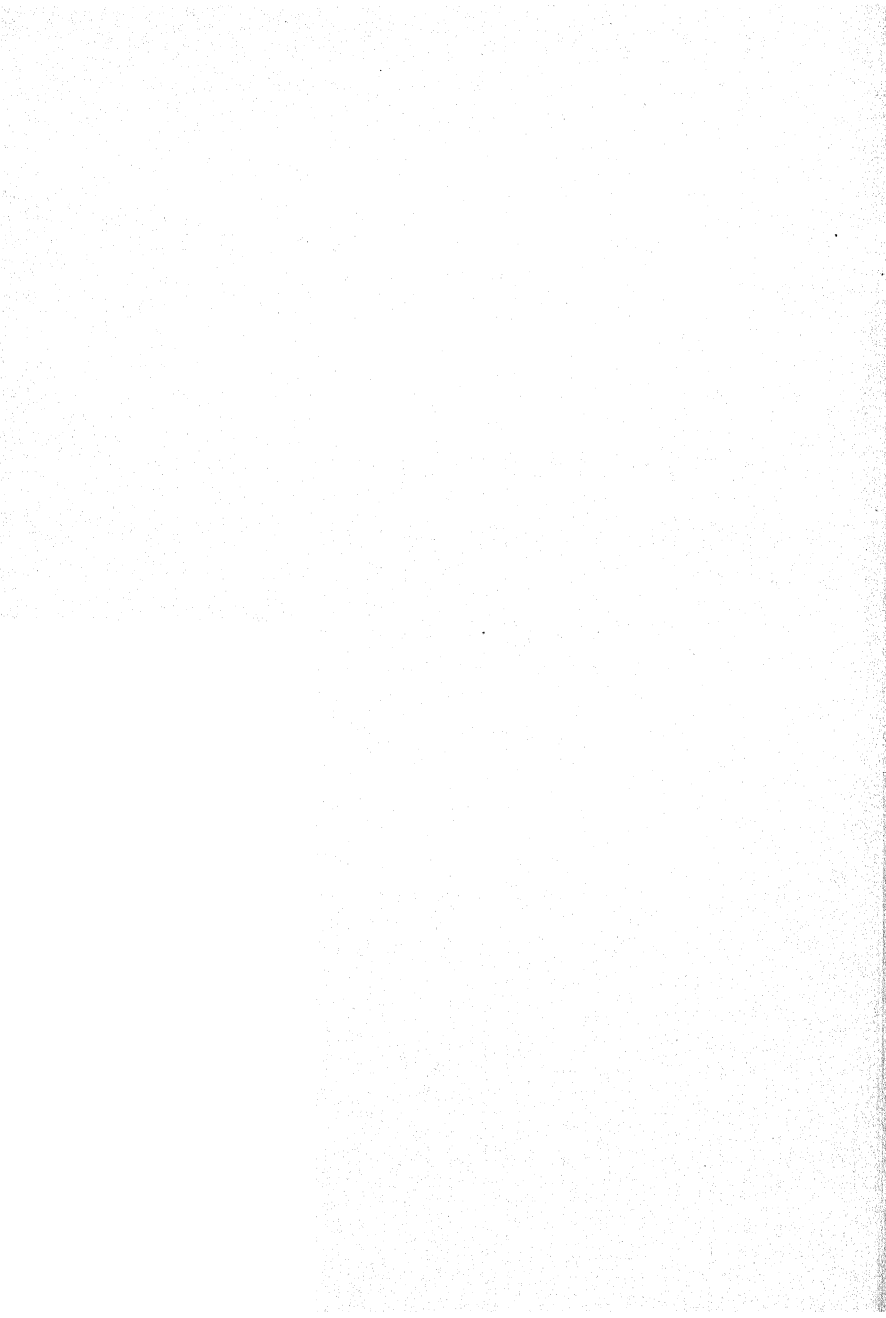
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PRINTED AT THE COLONIAL PRESS INC.  
CLINTON, MASS. U. S. A.

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## PREFACE

THE Indian administration of Sir John Shore (1st Baron Teignmouth), coming as it does between those of two great governors-general of India, Lord Cornwallis and Marquess Wellesley, has been generally overlooked by historians.<sup>1</sup> The period, however, of the early years of the French Revolution 1793-98 is not without interest in India's history. It is the time of calm before the coming storm, a time when native princes, British governors, and French agents plan and plot each in their own interests, all three conscious that the struggle in Europe may have great consequences for India's future. The series of documents herewith published is unusually complete and informative on every phase of British policy in India. Coupled with the public despatches in the India Office, the documents should present a complete record of the period. These are the private and secret letters of the Governor-General, Sir John Shore, to the President of the Board of Control,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In most of the shorter histories and text-books, Shore receives very brief mention, see e.g., Ramsay Muir, *Making of British India*, ch. v; V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, pp. 574-577; H. G. Keene, *History of India*, p. 255; W. W. Hunter, *India*, in vol. V of *History of Nations*, p. 196; L. J. Trotter, *History of India*, pp. 266-270; J. T. Wheeler, *A Short History of India*, pp. 399-403. In the longer histories, Shore's work is practically ignored in the new *Cambridge History of India*, receives very brief mention in the histories of India by Auber, Thornton, and Marshman. Mill devotes one chapter to him, but the best treatment of his administration is still that of John Malcolm, *Political History of India*, vol. I, ch. iii, London, 1826.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the government board for the supervision of India affairs set up by Pitt's India Act of 1784, known throughout its history as the "Board of Control." The president of this board was in a position analogous to that of the later Secretary of State for India.

Henry Dundas, beginning with the governor's letter written at the Cape on his way out to assume his government and ending with the letter written by him on his arrival home at Portsmouth in 1798 and signed with the new title with which the King had rewarded his services in India. Although excerpts from eight of these have already been printed in the *Memoir of the Life and Correspondence of Lord Teignmouth*<sup>1</sup> published by Shore's son in 1843, it has been thought best to print each letter here as a whole. It is impossible to include in full the appendices and enclosures accompanying the letters, but Shore's observations on the "State of Hindustan" and his vivid narrative of the "Revolution" which he carried out in Oudh in 1797 have been appended.

The Shore collection,<sup>2</sup> which forms a part of the Melville Papers sold at Sotheby's in London during the years 1924-29,<sup>3</sup> is by far the finest and most complete of the volumes of Henry Dundas's India Correspondence now available for study. The perusal of it forms an instructive object-lesson in the methods of Anglo-Indian government a century and a half ago. No one can lay aside the calf-bound volume with each letter

<sup>1</sup> This work is cited hereafter as Shore Correspondence.

<sup>2</sup> Melville MSS., in the possession of the writer.

<sup>3</sup> There were four sales, viz., June 2, 1924, April 26, 1926, Feb. 23, 1927, and final sale July 22, 1929. The Papers have in consequence been widely and regrettably scattered throughout the globe. The greater part of the Scottish correspondence has fortunately been purchased for the National Library of Scotland and has been recatalogued with great care by Dr. H. W. Meikle. The India papers were for the most part bought by Mr. Francis Edwards of 83 High St., London W 1, who kindly allowed them to be examined before further dispersion took place. For a fuller account of the whole collection, see the writer's *Henry Dundas*, appendix C, pp. 314-318.

carefully docketed without a profound admiration for the subordinate officials and clerks who guided the machinery through which the government of 24,000,000 people six thousand miles from London was supervised or without sympathy for the governors-general of India who so often felt that the stress of European affairs was preventing harassed Cabinet ministers from giving India her due meed of attention. The publication of this selection of Dundas's India Correspondence has been made possible by grants from the Robert Louis Stroock Fund and the Committee on Research in the Social Sciences of Harvard University,<sup>1</sup> for which the editor wishes to express his deep appreciation. It is hoped that the printing of these letters may call forth similar publications from others into whose hands many volumes of Melville Papers of importance have fallen.

HOLDEN FURBER.

*Lowell House, Harvard University,  
Cambridge, Massachusetts,  
March, 1933.*

<sup>1</sup> Certain items of Melville MSS., purchased under this grant, are deposited in the Harvard College Library through the courtesy of this Committee.





**THE PRIVATE RECORD OF AN  
INDIAN GOVERNOR-GENERALSHIP**



## INTRODUCTION

HAD the rising tide of the French Revolution not involved Britain in a great European war, the men in charge of Britain's destinies in India in the winter of 1792-93 might well have seen their expectations of a new era of peace and contentment fulfilled. To their eyes, Lord Cornwallis's genius for both civil and military administration had settled the outstanding problems before them. In the civil sphere, he had reorganized the internal government of Bengal and had placed the revenue upon a "permanent settlement."<sup>1</sup> In the military sphere, he had defeated Tippoo Sultan, shorn him of the greater part of his territories and prestige and had, even before Tippoo's defeat, made a tripartite treaty with the two other great native powers in India, the Mahratta Confederacy and the Nizam of Hyderabad, which bound all three to fight Tippoo in case he moved against any one of them. The French settlements were at this time insignificant, and it was not yet apparent that the distracted government at Paris would be able to bestow upon them even the amount of attention shown by the *ancien régime*. In England, to be sure, there was more anxiety about the future than in India, but in 1792, the Pitt ministry was still hopeful of preserving peace even though war had broken out on the Continent.<sup>2</sup> This state of affairs is worth remembering, for we, who know what was to come, are

<sup>1</sup> For the domestic administration of Cornwallis, see A. Aspinall, *Cornwallis in Bengal*, Manchester University Press, 1931.

<sup>2</sup> See J. H. Rose, chapter in *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, I, 216-236.

far too prone to think that the men of 1792 should have foreseen the Terror, and that the men who watched the Terror across the Channel should have foreseen Bonaparte. To us, these years between 1792 and 1798 are years of tremendous significance. Bonaparte's landing in Egypt follows as the night the day, but to the men who lived then it was not so. Under these circumstances, William Pitt and Henry Dundas, then leading member of the Government's Board of Control for India and Home Secretary, consented to the appointment of the writer of these letters, John Shore, the ablest of the East India Company's civil servants, as Governor-General of India to succeed Lord Cornwallis. In so doing, they broke their rule of appointing none but military men to the highest posts in India, but there was no one else to turn to.<sup>1</sup> It was not then apparent that Shore would be confronted with any great emergency.

John Shore was that comparatively rare political phenomenon in British-Indian history at this period, an honest man. Of a respectable Derbyshire family, and educated at Harrow, his future was marked out for him by the Indian connections of his grandmother's family. He accepted a writership in the East India Company's service in 1769, went out to India in his 'teens, and made a small fortune honestly while rising through the various grades of the Company's service in the days of Warren Hastings.<sup>2</sup> His connection with Hastings

<sup>1</sup> General Medows, previously designated in secret for the governor-generalship, refused to remain longer in India. See the writer's *Henry Dundas*, pp. 61, 126.

<sup>2</sup> For particulars with regard to Shore's early life, see Shore Corr., I, chs. i-iii.

gained him the inveterate, though undeserved, enmity of Burke.<sup>1</sup> From the first, he was imbued with strongly religious principles. A strong sense of the all pervading wisdom of Providence was with him everywhere. At times, his earlier letters from India betray a sort of fatalism which is truly Mohammedan. With his ideas of rectitude and strict morality, many of Hastings's earlier measures did not coincide, and, if in later years, he co-operated with Hastings, it was because he recognized the good that Hastings was doing in India and because Hastings recognized his worth as an administrator with expert knowledge of Indian finance.<sup>2</sup> His training with Hastings had ideally fitted him to be the right-hand man of Lord Cornwallis, especially as the latter's ideas of rectitude and morality were at one with his own.

Shore's years of service on the revenue board and in council had made him pre-eminent among the Company's civilians. It was he who oversaw and worked out the detail of many of Cornwallis's salutary internal reforms. It was he who went to England to inform Pitt and Dundas on the vexed problem of the "Permanent Settlement" of the Bengal Revenue. Most critics would agree that his own plan of a "decennial settlement" was preferable to that of his chief. In London, his "talents, integrity, and candor" won the respect of ministers.<sup>3</sup> No one else being available, they saw no reason why a man for whose appointment the Directors had been clamoring for years should not be sent out to carry into effect the reforms in Indian government

<sup>1</sup> See Shore's letter of Jan. 10th, 1794, *infra*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Shore Corr., I, 53, 69 ff.

<sup>3</sup> C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 213.

which he had done so much to frame.<sup>1</sup> Hence, the incredible happened. A man who had no great name, no military reputation, no great political influence, nothing in fact but an unblemished private character and long years of meritorious service behind him, was appointed to what had then become the highest and most responsible post in the British Empire.

A glance at his letters will show that the great problems of his administration were, in the main, three: namely, the questions arising out of the hostilities between the two British allies, the Nizam and the Mahrattas in 1794-95, the all but open mutiny in the British Army in Bengal, 1795-96, and the Revolution in Oudh in 1797. It has been customary for historians of British India to condemn Sir John Shore's handling of the first two of these problems; it is only with regard to his actions in Oudh that he receives any praise, and, even in that particular, he cannot escape the strictures of Mr. James Mill.<sup>2</sup> It is therefore only just that his policy should be re-examined in the light of the letters now before us.

With regard to the question of supporting the Nizam in his contest with the Mahrattas, there was no doubt whatever in Sir John Shore's mind. He had been sent out to India by the Directors to carry out a policy of

<sup>1</sup> The writer's *Henry Dundas*, p. 133. See also Lord Hobart's letter to Dundas, *infra*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> For criticism, see Malcolm, *op. cit.*, I, 117-194, J. C. Marshman, *History of India*, II, 51-70; James Mill, *History of British India*, VI, 20-47; Edward Thornton, *History of the British Empire in India*, II, 552-556. For praise of Sir John Shore's policy in Oudh, see Thornton, *op. cit.*, II, 556 ff.; Marshman, *op. cit.*, II, 70; V. A. Smith, *History of India*, p. 576. Mill's criticisms of the Oudh policy may be found in vol. VI, 47-56.

neutrality and non-interference in the disputes of native powers. While he was in England, the Government itself had professed to pursue this very policy, and he was, in all probability, unaware that as the troubles in Europe progressed, Dundas was becoming more and more sympathetic to a policy of aggression and aggrandizement in India.<sup>1</sup> There was nothing in the existing treaties which bound the Governor-General to support the Nizam in a case of this sort. What the treaties had contemplated was the joint co-operation of the Nizam, the Mahrattas, and the British, against Tippoo, Sultan of Mysore. In this case, Tippoo was supporting the Mahrattas. Moreover the Nizam's government was in a subordinate relation to the Mahratta confederacy and it was apparent that, in this dispute, the Nizam was the aggressor.<sup>2</sup> For these reasons, the Governor-General left the Nizam to his fate. In the spring of 1795, the Mahrattas defeated the Nizam at Kurdla, thus causing that enraged potentate to dismiss the British troops in his service. French influence and French-officered battalions under M. Raymond were left in the ascendant at the Nizam's court. Sir John Shore's critics have based their arguments mainly on the contention that the mere threat of British intervention would have held off the Mahrattas and kept the peace. This may be so, but, in order to carry out a policy of bluff, it is usually well to have a line of defence on which to fall back if one's bluff does not succeed. Sir

<sup>1</sup> See the writer's *Henry Dundas*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>2</sup> See note by H. H. Wilson in Mill, *op. cit.*, VI, 32. For Shore's minute of Feb. 18, 1795, on the dispute between the Mahrattas and the Nizam, see Malcolm, *op. cit.*, app. No. 2.

John Shore had no such line of defence. Neither his army nor his finances were ready to stand the strain of war with Tippoo and the Mahrattas. It had been less than three years since the finances of the Company had struggled under the burdens incident to the last war with Tippoo. The army in Bengal was seething with discontent and impatience while awaiting the new regulations which were to be sent out from England, and what is more important, Sir John Shore, as is revealed in these letters, then had no confidence in the abilities of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Robert Abercromby.<sup>1</sup>

Before passing final judgment on this subject, there are two other considerations which must be weighed. British support of the Nizam meant the hostility of the Mahrattas, an enmity far more formidable than that of the Nizam. It is also worth noting that the French officers with the Mahrattas, the corps of De Boigne, were not violent partisans of the French Revolution. Raymond, the commander of the French officers with the Nizam, was in sympathy with French Revolutionary intrigue.<sup>2</sup> In the second place, Sir John Shore's long Indian experience led him to believe that the victors in this native war would inevitably quarrel over the spoils. In this he was not disappointed; within the next two years, the British were able partially to re-establish their influence over the Nizam as a consequence of the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide infra*, p. 60. Also Marshman, *Abridgement of the History of India*, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> *Re* De Boigne, see Shore Corr., I, 333; also Herbert Compton's essay on De Boigne in *A Particular Account of the European Military Adventurers of Hindustan*, London, 1893. *Re* Raymond, see Malcolm, *op. cit.*, I, 154; also Thos. Keightley, *History of India*, p. 134, where Raymond is called a "fierce republican."



rebellion of his son Ali Jah, which had been fomented by Mahratta intrigue.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, if we look at the whole history of these years, there is no doubt that Sir John Shore's policy of neutrality in this war seriously weakened British prestige throughout India and provided a ready channel through which French influence could flow from Europe in case British supremacy on the sea were lost. These observations are not intended to exonerate him from blame on this score, but merely to indicate that his actions are not as stupid and short-sighted as they seem to many writers on Indian history. As a recent biographer of Wellesley has well said, "It is possible to overstate the theory that in India the only alternative to retrogression is aggrandizement."<sup>2</sup> The consequences of this mistake had been in the main obviated when Sir John Shore left India in 1798, for Lord Wellesley found a situation "critical but not alarming" which did not necessarily involve wars of conquest and annexation.<sup>3</sup>

We now come to a consideration of the mutinous discontent in the Bengal Army which occupies so large a place in Sir John Shore's correspondence and which has been almost entirely ignored in most histories of India.<sup>4</sup> The root of trouble in this, as in so many other branches of the Indian service, lay in the dual system of govern-

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm, *op. cit.*, I, 151; Mill, *op. cit.*, VI, 36.

<sup>2</sup> P. E. Roberts, *India Under Wellesley*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> The army disputes of this period are almost entirely ignored in the *Cambridge History of India*, Malcolm, Mill, Thornton, and Auber. Marshman treats the matter more fully, but without inspiring confidence in his accuracy. His account is exaggerated, and gives a misleading impression of the extent of Shore's concessions to the Army. See Marshman II, 65.

ment. There were both King's troops and Company's troops in India. In former days, King's officers had out-ranked their Company colleagues of the same grade without any reference whatever to seniority in age or experience. Although this grievance had been partially remedied in 1788, the Company's officers were serving in 1794 under conditions which, in whatever light they are regarded, were intolerable. Practically speaking, hope of promotion to the higher ranks in the Company's service was so small as to be negligible. Out of about 1,000 infantry officers there were only 52 field-officers. A young cadet stood a far better chance of dying in the service than of ultimately attaining a responsible post thirty years after his arrival in India. In the mid-eighteenth century promotion had been more rapid because the number of officers was smaller and the casualties from wounds and disease were far larger than in the 1790's.<sup>1</sup> Hope of promotion being so slender, an officer's main interest lay in the accumulation, by fair means or foul, of a private fortune sufficient for his needs upon his return to England. Opportunities for making money naturally were to be found, not in service with a regiment of Europeans, but with a regiment of sepoys.<sup>2</sup> Consequently the European regiments were badly-officered by uninterested men whose only ambition was a transfer to a native regiment, where one's

<sup>1</sup> On army conditions, see Sir A. Cardew, *The White Mutiny* (i.e. Madras mutiny in 1809), chs. i and ii; also W. J. Wilson, *History of the Madras Army*, II, 280-297.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. letter of Sir Robert Abercromby, Commander-in-Chief, to Dundas, June 29, 1796: "It is well known that the Company's Officers, in general, serve with the utmost reluctance in European regiments." Melville MSS., deposited in Harvard College Library.

meagre pay was increased by larger amounts of *batta* (subsistence allowances), payments of bazar money (a tribute laid upon shop-keepers by the soldiery) and, what is most important, sums surreptitiously withdrawn from the subsistence allowances of the sepoys. A confidential report to Sir John Shore, too long to be included here, describes the nature and extent of these dishonest practices which had become so common as to be sanctioned by usage. Not only had the Bengal officer no hope of promotion, but he had no hope of a retiring allowance greater than the small sum provided by Lord Clive's fund. He could not return to England without resigning his commission, and, if he did not go back to India within a very few months, he had no prospect of reinstatement.<sup>1</sup> When one adds to these grievances the fact that the friction between King's and Company's officers did not subside, it is no wonder that in 1794 discontent was rife among the thousand officers who controlled the 3,500 European and 23,000 native troops in Bengal.<sup>2</sup>

This state of affairs had naturally not escaped the attention of Lord Cornwallis, who devoted his leisure on his return voyage to the composition of a new arrangement for the armies in India. To Cornwallis's mind, the obvious remedy was the transfer of the whole military establishment to the King's service. Although Corn-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*; also F. G. Cardew, *Sketch of the Services of the Bengal Native Army*, pp. 66-68.

<sup>2</sup> According to a detailed plan enclosed in one of Shore's letters, the Bengal Army in January, 1794, consisted of: 19,584 Sepoys; 2,880 Sepoy officers of the lowest ranks; 840 Sepoy artillerymen; 3,480 European troops, and 1,184 European officers, 336 of whom were sergeants and corporals in European regiments.

wallis arrived home early in 1794, the government was inexcusably dilatory in giving any consideration to so important a subject. It was not until November, 1794, that Cornwallis's ideas were presented for official action.<sup>1</sup> Even after that date, matters moved very slowly because Dundas was aware that the Directors would never consent to the destruction of the Company's Army as a separate force. The greater part of the year 1795 was spent in bickering between the Board of Control and the Court of Directors.<sup>2</sup> All idea of a plan similar to that of Cornwallis or to the more moderate plan suggested by Shore in 1794 was perforce given up.<sup>3</sup> The Directors consented to a remodelling of their armies which provided for more rapid promotion, systematic furlough, better pay and hence less reliance on extra allowances of batta. This plan arrived in India in the spring of 1796, too late to be carried fully into effect, but in the nick of time to avert serious trouble.<sup>4</sup>

In the preceding months, the Bengal officers, exasperated by the interminable delays of the home authorities, were on the verge of open mutiny. Sir John Shore was in a very difficult position during these years. He knew that Dundas had openly proclaimed in Parliament the justice of some of the officers' grievances.<sup>5</sup> He knew that agents of the discontented officers were given a

<sup>1</sup> C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 567 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 295, 314 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Infra*, pp. 33-34, 36-46.

<sup>4</sup> For remarks on the Directors' army plan, see C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 317-324; F. G. Cardew, *Services of the Bengal Native Army*, pp. 66-69; W. J. Wilson, *History of the Madras Army*, II, 282-287.

<sup>5</sup> C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 302 n.

sympathetic hearing in London. He also knew that Committees of officers had been formed at every station to correspond with each other with regard to a concerted plan to force redress of their wrongs.<sup>1</sup> The arrival in India in the spring of 1795 of Cornwallis's plan of abolishing the separate status of the Company's officers added fuel to the flames. Much as they disliked the presence of King's officers and regiments at Calcutta who asserted their superiority to the Company's corps, the Company officers did not wish to see their separate organization and peculiar arrangements as to batta and bazar fund merged in the Royal Army.

Under these circumstances, it is difficult to see how Sir John Shore could have followed any other course than that which he did follow, and which has laid him open to the charge of weakness and vacillation. His cardinal principle was to maintain that the old system must be enforced until the new Regulations arrived from Europe. He forbade public meetings of the officers in Calcutta and elsewhere even when the ostensible purpose of the meetings was the support of Warren Hastings's cause. When the months went by with no official word from home, he can hardly be blamed for promising in December, 1795, to promulgate a reform scheme of his own if no definite orders arrived from home by a certain date early in 1796.<sup>2</sup> In January, 1796, discontent

<sup>1</sup> On March 8, 1794, Sir Robert Abercromby wrote Dundas that committees of correspondence had been formed long before Cornwallis's departure. In May discontent was not so general. See Melville MSS., deposited in Harvard College Library, Abercromby corr., letters of Mar. 8, and May 14, 1794.

<sup>2</sup> Shore felt that this declaration ought to have inspired confidence, but it was suppressed by Robert Stuart, the officer commanding at

reached such alarming heights that Sir John wrote to Lord Hobart, the Governor of Madras, for reinforcements.<sup>1</sup> He also wrote to Sir James Craig at the Cape, and it is said that, without Shore's knowledge, Sir John Murray prepared to use the artillery at Fort William against the mutineers.<sup>2</sup> On the 21st January, Sir Robert Abercromby, the Commander-in-Chief, left for the Upper Stations to assert the authority of the Government.<sup>3</sup> So far was he successful at Cawnpore that the discontented spirits at Dinapore, Fatehgarh, Midnapore, and Berhampore refrained from breaking into open revolt. Nevertheless, discontent was so rife when the new army regulations finally arrived that Sir John Shore felt it wise to suspend the principles of Regimental Rise and to augment the allowances to some extent. These alterations were later approved by the Court of Directors. By 1797, order, tranquillity, and efficiency in the Army were entirely restored.<sup>4</sup>

For his action in softening the Regulations already sent out, Pitt and Dundas censured Sir John Shore severely. His letters concerning the insubordination in

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Fatehgarh, who was afraid it would have the opposite effect. Melville MSS., deposited in Harvard College Library, R. Stuart to Dundas, June 22, 1796, and enclosures.

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, pp. 151-158.

<sup>2</sup> Shore Corr., I, 350, 370. See W. J. Wilson, *History of the Madras Army*, II, 284, for comment on Marshman's exaggerated and misleading account of this crisis in *History of India*, II, 65 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Melville MSS., deposited in Harvard College Library, Abercromby to Dundas, dated Fatehgarh, Feb. 22, 1796.

<sup>4</sup> *Infra*, pp. 113-114. Cf. Melville MSS., deposited in Harvard College Library, Abercromby to Dundas, Aug. 29, 1796. "I have the satisfaction to inform you that the Army Regulations have been carried into effect at the three Presidencies; and that ill-humour and discontent have disappeared."

the Army, arriving of course months after those troubles subsided, so alarmed them that they were more anxious than ever to replace Shore with a stronger man.<sup>1</sup> An impartial review of the situation ought to have convinced them that they and the Court of Directors were the real culprits. Had they been more prompt in grappling with the problem, discontent would not have reached so dangerous a pitch in the winter of 1795-96. It is impossible to come away from a perusal of the correspondence on this subject without a feeling that no other course than that of tactful conciliation was open to the Governor-General. Even in the hands of Cornwallis, a denial of all concessions might have produced an explosion which would have undermined the Company's authority in Bengal. It may be that Shore's last concessions were too broad, but it is perfectly apparent that the necessity for them would not have arisen if the Directors had not bungled the business in London. Shore was much incensed at the reception given the officers' agents in London which encouraged them to write back to Bengal urging the malcontents to stand firm in their demands.<sup>2</sup>

This whole episode is an instructive one. It reveals the insecure footing upon which the authority of a European power rested in India, even at this period.

<sup>1</sup> C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 317-320, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> A letter from J. Collins, the governor-general's military secretary to Robert Stuart, commanding officer at Fatehgarh, dated April 24, 1796, states that Shore had not then received a single line from the Court of Directors or from Dundas in regard to the new regulations. Shore was forced to depend on information which came from the officers' agents in London, via Madras. Melville MSS., deposited in Harvard College Library.

At a time of unexampled difficulty for the British Empire, the motives which actuate the Bengal officers are those, not of patriotism, but of profit and self-interest. Just as were their grievances, they thought nothing of plotting to seize the Governor-General and overthrow the Company's Government. India was in this age the happy hunting-ground of military adventurers of all European nationalities who took service under native princes, and it is not without the bounds of possibility that, had British government broken down, an intrepid European officer with a few thousand loyal sepoy at his back could have, for a brief space of time, wielded paramount authority over a considerable portion of the country. The episode is also valuable for the insight it affords into the weaknesses of the dual system of Indian government. Not only the year's time which must elapse before the arrival of a reply to a despatch sent from India, but the necessity of consulting the whims and prejudices of the Directors, is clearly shown, with all its implications. The maintenance of empire under such conditions is truly a remarkable achievement.

No sooner had army affairs been fairly well settled than Sir John Shore was forced to deal with the increasing misgovernment in the territories of the Nawab Wazir of Oudh, Asoph-ud-daula. In the spring of 1797, the Governor-General proceeded to Lucknow with the intention of effecting a radical reorganization in the Nawab's government. When his dominions were threatened by the advancing horde of Afghans under the redoubtable Zemaun Shah, the terror of Hindustan in this decade, the Nawab was ready to promise the



Company anything in return for the maintenance of its troops in his dominions. The retreat of Zemaun Shah from Lahore removed this danger, and Sir John Shore came away from Lucknow having achieved nothing more than the addition of five and one-half lacs of rupees to the Company's tribute.<sup>1</sup> Fate, however, was kind to the "Great Company." Within a few months, the Nawab Wazir, still in the prime of life, succumbed to the excessive use of opium. At first, the Supreme Government, acting on reports from Lucknow, recognized Ali, the adopted son of the Nawab, as his successor. In the ensuing months there was such restiveness at Lucknow and so many rumours of the "spurious birth" of the new Nawab were current that Sir John Shore determined once more to visit Oudh in person. Accompanied by Sir Alured Clarke, the then Commander-in-Chief, he came in January, 1798. In his proceedings on this occasion, there is no hint of weakness or vacillation. The evidence that the Wazir Ali was of low birth was overwhelming. The Governor-General moved in this atmosphere of intrigue with a calm courage born of his unswerving trust in the justice of his course and the wisdom of Providence. He determined to place on the throne the elder brother of the deceased Nawab, Saada't Ali Khan, and, as will appear in his "Narrative" of these transactions, accomplished his purpose at a time when a single false step would have plunged Lucknow in blood. The new Nawab signed a treaty by which he promised to reform the government, augmented the tribute to seventy-six lacs, and ceded the fortress of Allahabad to the Com-

<sup>1</sup> Shore Corr., I., 402-416.

pany.<sup>1</sup> For his behaviour on this occasion, Shore has not escaped the criticism of Mr. James Mill, who apparently starts from a major premise that arrangements of this kind with native princes are *prima facie* immoral.<sup>2</sup> It may be that the evidence for Ali's spuriousness was so weak as not to merit the credence of a western court, but Shore, who had lived with Indians most of his life, had no doubt that the case was proved. A Governor-General of a Machiavellian turn of mind might well have pursued a policy of laissez-faire at the price of extorting great concessions from Wazir Ali. That was not Shore's way. In no other aspect of his government does Shore appear so well or so deserving of the opinion of him held by his superiors when they appointed him. He returned to Calcutta to hand over a tranquil India to his successor. It was well that his service in India was over. Bonaparte's landing in Egypt was to create problems which demanded the stronger leadership of that great imperial proconsul, Richard Colley Wellesley.

Before we leave Shore's administration altogether, some attention is due the minor problems which he faced. It will be noticed that there runs through the letters the story of French naval effort in the Indian Seas and the British attempts to forestall it by captur-

<sup>1</sup> Shore Corr., I, 438-450.

<sup>2</sup> See Mill, *op. cit.*, VI, 49-56. There appears to be some confusion as to exactly how the Mohammedan law of adoption affected the status of Wazir Ali, as the "acknowledged" son of the late Nawab. According to Sir William Markby, *An Introduction to Hindu and Mohammedan Law*, pp. 136 ff., it would seem that he had a strong claim. The opposing argument is set forth with vigor in Shore Corr., I, app. v.

ing the Dutch settlements in Ceylon and in what are now the Dutch East Indies. The capture of Ceylon was the work of the Madras Government, and little need be said in criticism of the conduct of the expeditions against the spice islands. It was indeed fortunate that the last of these, sent against Manila in 1797, was recalled after it had arrived at Penang with the future Duke of Wellington on board.<sup>1</sup> There also runs through the letters the story of Sir John Shore's differences with Lord Hobart, the governor of Madras, and a man of very different stamp. Hobart was not a disinterested public servant of Shore's type. He had come to India to make his reputation and his fortune, and he had been promised the Governor-Generalship on Shore's departure. He was unquestionably a stronger man than Shore. The ability and energy which he displayed in capturing the Dutch settlements testify to that, but a perusal of his correspondence leads one to a conviction that his violent program would have been more dangerous for India than Shore's more placid policy. He believed in handling native princes without gloves, riding roughshod over treaties provided he was sure his cause was just. One cannot help sympathizing with this attitude in the case of the notorious Nawab of Arcot, whose debts are such a scandal in the Anglo-Indian history of these years. Nevertheless, Shore stood upon the treaties and the former policy of the Company. His refusal to sanction Hobart's agreements with the Nawab of Arcot, the Rajah of Tanjore, and the King of Candy in Ceylon threw Hobart into an uncontrollable rage.

<sup>1</sup> C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 331. P. Guedalla, *The Duke*, p. 77.

He felt himself thwarted by this "milk and water" governor-general of low birth who opposed his every plan and obstinately persisted in staying on in the post which he had come out to fill.<sup>1</sup>

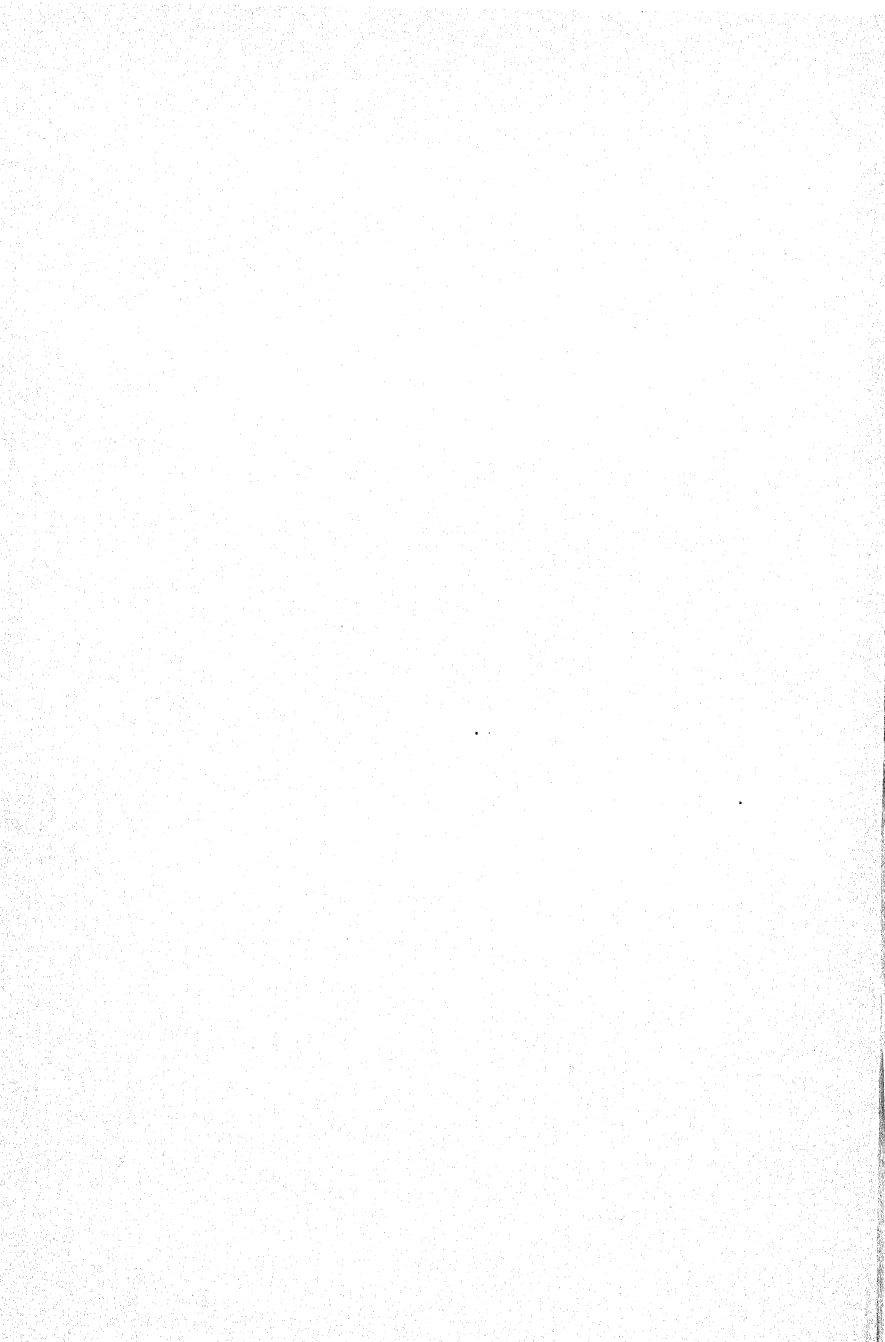
Shore, as his correspondence shows, bore all this with the patience of Job. He recounted his differences with Madras in terms of regret, but he praised Lord Hobart's abilities, ignored his jealous outbursts of temper, and never allowed himself to utter a harsh word. Hobart's letters, on the contrary, betray the utmost violence, anger, and impatience. The loss of his wife and infant baby afford him some excuse but, on reading the letters, two of which are printed here, one can easily imagine the distress which they gave Dundas and Pitt, six months away from the scene of action. It is no wonder that they concluded that the only thing to do was to bring both governors home. Consequently, on Pitt's refusal to let Dundas go to India himself, the long-suffering Cornwallis was prevailed upon to accept the appointment, only to relinquish it when the murmurs of the coming rebellion in Ireland necessitated his transfer to that more difficult post.<sup>2</sup>

One comes away from the study of these letters of Sir John Shore with a firm and deep conviction of the wisdom of Pitt's policy of appointing, as governors-general of India, experienced military men of established reputation who had not been too closely associated with the Company's service. If such a man had been available, there is no doubt that Shore ought not to have been in supreme command, and it is not strange

<sup>1</sup> See the writer's *Henry Dundas*, pp. 133-137.

<sup>2</sup> C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 318-334.

that an honest and conscientious civil servant destined to devote the remainder of his life to the work of philanthropic and religious organizations should not rank in history as a great governor-general of India. The faults alleged against him—neutrality, refusal to assert prestige, conciliation, and vacillation are not the marks of great state-craft, especially in the East. Nevertheless, one wonders whether India would have fared better under Lord Hobart's administration. If one may judge from his correspondence, Lord Hobart, could he have had his way, would certainly have done his best to follow Machiavelli, and one cannot help feeling that he might have wrecked India, while Sir John Shore, in spite of his mistakes, kept the ship of state on an even keel until he could hand it over to an abler pilot. That in itself is no small achievement, and it should entitle him to better treatment from posterity. When he wrote, as he frequently did, to more intimate friends than Dundas, that he felt himself inadequate to his task, he did himself an injustice. As it happened, he was adequate to the task in these years. Even though he could not forge ahead, he could hold the rudder true amidst many dangers. His letters, though not great state-papers, are human documents which throw a flood of light upon a troubled and complex period hitherto but imperfectly understood in our day and generation.



**SIR JOHN SHORE'S LETTERS**  
**to**  
**HENRY DUNDAS**  
**1793-1798**





## I

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE  
January 10th 1793

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to inform You that we reached this port on the 7th Instant, after a long passage of ten weeks & three days, & propose sailing again for Bengal tomorrow. I had the satisfaction to find the Europa Indiaman here with a Cargo of Sugar, & to learn that she had been preceded by the Ganges with a similar freight. I read also in the Bengal papers that the Company's paper bore a premium. Lord Cornwallis has done so much that his Successor will find it a difficult Task to preserve his Credit; I do not however despair, & with the Continuance of the same good health which I at present enjoy, I hope to deserve well of those who have honoured me with my present Appointment.

His Lordship I learn, anxiously awaits a Successor, but will not leave India before my Arrival. Yourself & Lord Macartney<sup>1</sup> have been mentioned in Bengal as likely to succeed him. Mr. Stewart has taken his passage with Captain Dundas.

I have the honor to be . . . .

Recd. per Europa  
16th April 1793

## II

CALCUTTA  
March 25th 1793<sup>2</sup>

Sir,

It will not I flatter myself be uninteresting to You to learn that I have enjoyed a perfect state of Health, since my Arrival in Calcutta on the 10th Instant, and I feel a Confidence,

<sup>1</sup> George Macartney, 1st Earl Macartney 1737-1806; Envoy to Russia 1764-67; Chief Secretary, Ireland 1769-72; Governor of Grenada 1775-79; Governor of Madras 1781-85; Ambassador to China 1792-94; Governor of the Cape of Good Hope 1796-98. See *D.N.B.*

<sup>2</sup> The greater part of this letter is printed in Shore Corr., I, 237.

that the Influence of the Climate will prove less pernicious to my Constitution, than during my former Residence in India.

You are apprized by Lord Cornwallis of his determination to retain the Government for some months longer, and I most sincerely assure You that this Resolution is no source of regret to me. The delay will afford me an Opportunity of acquiring the most accurate Information on the Affairs of every Department, without pursuing that incessant Application for this purpose, which would have been indispensable, if his Lordship's Departure had been sudden. I am not insensible of the peculiar Difficulties, which the Success and reputation of his Lordship's Administration, must impose upon his Successor, but with the Advantage of knowing his principles, and a determination to adhere to them, with zealous application, and Integrity that no man shall ever justly impeach, I have no fears of doing Credit to the Patronage, that has deemed me worthy to be his Successor, & I hope to escape the Reflection which Tacitus applies to Galba, *consensu omnium capax imperii, nisi imperasset*.<sup>1</sup>

From the cursory view which I have been able to take of the situation of Affairs in general, I am not qualified to say more, than [that] they have a very prosperous Appearance, and that I foresee nothing that has any Tendency to alarm or discourage. The various Arrangements introduced by Lord Cornwallis, being founded on Equity and sound Policy, are calculated to produce practical Improvement, and I most sincerely assure You, that to promote that effect, will afford me more solid Satisfaction, than any that I should derive from an augmentation of my fortune, or from the Honors which you can bestow upon me. If any exception occurs to the course of general Improvement, it is in the Vizier's territories,<sup>2</sup> which I learn are far from being in a prosperous State. But as I have not had any Communications with his Lordship, on this Subject, I will not antici-

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Hist.*, I, 49.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, Oudh.

pate Information, which I may hereafter be able to detail with greater Accuracy.

Several important Regulations were proposed by Lord Cornwallis, for the internal Administration of the Company's Territories some Time previous to my Arrival, and had obtained the Sanction of the Supreme Board. At his Lordship's desire I have recorded my Opinion on his plan of Arrangement expressing my unqualified Approbation of the principles on which it is founded, & that I thought the regulations in detail well calculated to give Energy to those principles. Two Considerations would however have deterred *me* from carrying the plan into Execution, without the previous Sanction of the Court of Directors, if his Lordship had postponed it, untill his Departure. These are the Increase of expense, and the Strictures expressed upon Innovations of System. To these Objections ready and I trust satisfactory Answers, can in the present Instance be made, & I have no hesitation to avow, that the relative situation of this Country to Great Britain, absolutely requires, every possible Restriction in the exercise of discretionary Authority, either by the Government General or its executive Officers, that can be adopted, without restraining its Ability to do good.

I shall take the Liberty of continuing my Correspondence with You, whenever I have any important Communications to make, & I have the honor to be. . . .

Rec'd. per Tartar Packet  
31 Decemr. 1793

## III

BENGAL  
November 9th 1793

The Right Honourable  
Henry Dundas  
&ca &ca &ca

Sir,

1. I have the honor to inform you that I succeeded to the Government on the 28th of last Month, and permit me to

assure you that no exertions shall be wanting on my part, to discharge my duty zealously and conscientiously.

2. In the Communications of Lord Cornwallis, you will obtain all the Information which I could afford, on India Affairs, previous to the period of his Lordship's Departure, and few events have since occurred, which require particular detail. My address to the Court of Directors contains a summary review of the most important subjects, and a recapitulation of what I have written to them, would be an useless intrusion upon your Time.

3. I have already expressed my unqualified acquiescence in the principles of his Lordship's Administration, and I shall do all I can, to give energy and effect to them, in the conviction that they are well calculated to promote the Prosperity of India. I have no reason whatever to suppose, that a Deviation from any of the Regulations established by his Lordship, is either necessary or expedient, and I am too sensible of the propriety of an adherence to established Systems, to entertain a wish of wantonly departing from them. To consolidate his plans & Arrangements, and facilitate the execution of them, I consider the most essential duty of his Successor, and this I will strive to effect, without however renouncing the cautious exercise of my own Judgement, or the Information of progressive experience, which I shall endeavour to acquire by every possible Mode. The wise, honourable, upright & successfull Administration of his Lordship, has imposed an arduous Task upon his Successor, but I will not despair of obtaining both his Approbation and yours.

4. That you may be enabled to form a judgement upon my political principles & Conduct, I have the honour to enclose for your perusal, some Reflections on the State of Hindustan, which I wrote soon after my return to this Country.<sup>1</sup> Lord Cornwallis is in possession of a Copy of them, & I shall be happy to receive the Benefit of your Correction. During my former Residence in India, the political Department had

<sup>1</sup> *Infra*, pp. 137-148.

comparatively speaking less of my attention than any other, and in compiling the Reflections now submitted to you, I had nothing more in View than to arrange & fix my political Ideas & principles. I might at this moment avail myself of a pretended Anticipation, to correct my Conjectures on some points, but as I intend to communicate my Sentiments to you from Time to Time in the same form, you will see them as they arise & trace the alterations in them in consequence of better Information or new Occurrences. His Lordship has obtained, and carries with him, very ample Information for the future regulation of military affairs, and although it may be presumptuous in me to discuss subjects, on which his Lordship is so peculiarly well qualified to suggest the best arrangement, I shall take the Liberty to communicate to you if possible by the next conveyance, such Information as I have been able to obtain; and in doing this I shall feel the less reluctance as Lord Cornwallis will be on the spot to correct, and improve my Sentiments by his own Knowledge & experience on the subject of the Army. I have mentioned some hints to Mr. Charles Grant,<sup>1</sup> with a request that he would communicate them to you.

After waiting with much expectation the arrival of a naval force from Europe, We have resolved to equip a naval armament in this Country, on the grounds of urgent and indispensable necessity. My address to the Court of Directors contains a summary of the reasons which influenced our Determination. One Country Vessel only, has hitherto been taken up, but it is in contemplation to fit out another of inferior Strength. The particular Details on this subject, are stated in a minute which I recorded at the Board, and a Copy of it accompanies the public Dispatches, to which I must beg your Permission to refer you, in the hopes you will approve exertions, which the Reputation of this Government, and the Security of the Trade, render'd indispensibly necessary.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Grant, 1746-1823. First went to India 1767. Statesman and philanthropist; chairman or deputy-chairman East India Company for many years; evangelical. See *D.N.B.*

I must also apologize to you for the Shortness of this letter, by alledging what is really true, that since my Accession to the Government, I have not had an hour unemployed. The Business however does not accumulate, and when this Pacquet is gone I hope to give a currency to the dispatch of affairs, that will enable me to be more particular in my future Communications.

The comparative abstract between the estimated & actual Receipts of this Government, I communicated officially to the Court of Directors but I have the pleasure to send you a Copy of it.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to acknowledge the Receipt of your Letters of May 15th and 16th and will shew every Attention in my power, to your Wishes in favour of the Gentlemen mentioned in them.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Charlotte Cutter  
April 1794

## IV

BENGAL  
January 10th 1794

*Private*  
Dear Sir,

I have already had the honor to acknowledge the receipt of many Letters from You, but shall again recapitulate the

<sup>1</sup> This abstract shows the following schedule of receipts:

	1791/2	1792/3
Mint duties	22,224	57,039
P. O. Collections	1,32,770	1,32,610
Nawab of Oudh	55,50,000	55,50,000
Land Revenue	3,16,18,240	3,33,51,164
Land Revenue Arrears	10,58,925	16,72,280
Salt	79,05,152	1,10,17,790
Opium	27,50,906	29,09,157
Customs Calcutta	4,30,924	4,89,716
Customs Manglee	2,71,973	3,00,511
Total Rupees	4,97,41,114	5,54,80,267

dates of them : viz. November 1st 1792 : May 15 thru—May 16, May ——. & May 26th. For the many obliging Communications in the first, I have only to return You my sincere thanks, with an Assurance, that Mr Burke's Enmity gives me no Uneasiness, and that no friend or Patron of mine shall ever have reason to blush at my want of Integrity.

In proportion as I acquire a more perfect Insight into the extensive affairs of this Government, I find the greater reason to admire the wonderfull Talents and success of my predecessor. Without any misappropriation of Time, I can scarce command sufficient for the discharge of my public Duties ; I have however vanquished the first Difficulties ; and when the Season of European Correspondence is past, I hope to save sufficient Leisure for improving, as well as dispatching current Business. My general health, notwithstanding some occasional Attacks upon it, still continues good ; I shall attend to the state of it, and if I should have reason to apprehend, such a diminution of it, as would disqualify me from the duties of my Administration, I shall take the earliest opportunity of soliciting the Appointment of a Successor, at present I have no wish to leave this Country, provided my Conduct be approved.

It will afford you Satisfaction to learn that the greatest Harmony prevails amongst the Members of this Government. I received Sir Robert Abercrombie <sup>1</sup> with all possible Attention & Civility, and have experienced the same disposition on his part ; he appears perfectly good tempered, his Integrity is irreproachable, and having the same Object, I see no probable Ground of Difference. I know the Importance of Unanimity, to my private Tranquillity as well as public Interests, and provided the Business be well done, I care not through what Channel it is effected.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Abercromby, 1740-1827. Younger brother of Sir Ralph Abercromby, hero of Aboukir. Served in Seven Years War and American War. Went to India 1788. Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Bombay, 1790-92 ; Commander-in-Chief, Bengal, 1793-97. See Haydn's *Book of Dignities*, and *D.N.B.*

Admiral Cornwallis has informed us of his Determination to return to Europe with the *Minerva*, the only ship of his Majesty remaining in India: a Sense of Duty, induced Us to address him, in the hopes of prevailing upon him to change his Resolution; for although no one ship can be equal to the purpose of general Protection, it is undeniable that essential Benefit would be derived from the Continuance of the *Minerva* in India, particularly under his Zeal & Activity<sup>1</sup>: the French Privateers have made great Depredations upon our Private Trade, and the Captures made by them cannot be less than sixteen Ships. It never occurred to me, and still less to You, that the French at the Islands,<sup>2</sup> possessed the means of making such Exertions.

A report has for some Time prevailed of the Capture of Bencoolen;<sup>3</sup> at first, from the circumstantial account of the Manner in which it was said to have been effected, as com-

<sup>1</sup> Rear-admiral Cornwallis, brother of the Marquess, probably on orders, denuded the India Station of all ships except one after the peace with Tippoo. This caused the government at home to be much criticised by the Company, as it exposed the Indian Seas to the ravages of French privateers. See G. Cornwallis-West, *Life and Letters of Admiral Cornwallis*, ch. xi. The account in William James, *Naval History of Great Britain*, I, 218, should be corrected in the light of the above chapter. Admiral Cornwallis was relieved by Sir Peter Rainier in October, 1793. See Cornwallis-West, *op. cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, Réunion and Mauritius, then known as Bourbon and Ile de France.

<sup>3</sup> This was a false rumour, probably the result of the capture of the *Princess Royal* by privateers, off Java, Sept., 1793. The following facts are worth noting. On 17th Jan., 1794, two French privateers made an unsuccessful attack on the *Pigot*, Indiaman, refitting at Bencoolen. On the 22nd January, these privateers were captured by Mitchell's Squadron, which had arrived off Singapore on the 2nd. On the 25th January, Mitchell fought a drawn battle with the main French squadron, and went to Batavia to refit. The French squadron meanwhile sailed for Bencoolen, captured the *Pigot* on the 9th February, and demanded the surrender of Fort Marlborough, but the British commander induced the French squadron to withdraw by persuading them that Commodore Mitchell was hourly expected. See William James, *Naval History of Great Britain*, I, 218-222 (1860 edition).



municated by private Intelligence, I deemed the report credible, but a Vessel is since arrived from the West Coast of Sumatra, not indeed from Fort Marlbro', without any Confirmation of the Intelligence. I am particularly anxious to ascertain the Truth, for the Secret Instructions to Captain Mitchell,<sup>1</sup> the Commodore of our Squadron, direct him to proceed to the Relief of Fort Marlbro', if he should receive credible Information that it is attacked; and by a Letter from him off Junk Ceylon, about two days sail from Penang, it seems, that he believes the Capture, and refers to his Instructions in a manner, that indicates a determination to proceed to Fort Marlbro'. In this case, he will neither be able to protect the Eastern Trade, nor to return to Bengal before May, whereas if he had pursued his original Destination, he would probably have arrived in the river [?] by the 15th 20th of February at the latest. Mitchell could only have got his Intelligence from a Vessel which had left Penang a few days before, & on his Arrival at that Island, I entertain strong hopes, that the more accurate Information of Captain Light<sup>2</sup> will prove the Report of the Capture of Bencoolen ill founded. Notwithstanding the various surmises respecting the French Cruisers in the Indian Seas, I am firmly of Opinion, that they consist of privateers only, and that there is not any Frigates among them: our Squadron is certainly equal to two Frigates. I cannot pass over another report of a more agreeable Tenor, that the Governor of Mauritius, has hoisted the White Flag, without vouching however for the Truth of it.<sup>3</sup>

I promised in a former Address to communicate to You, my Sentiments on the Arrangement of the Army in Bengal,

<sup>1</sup> Captain, later Commodore Charles Mitchell, see James, *Naval History of Great Britain*, I, 218.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Francis Light, commander of an Indian "country-ship" or free trader, erroneously said to have married the daughter of the Malayan Sultan of Kedah, receiving Penang as her dowry. British annexation of Penang took place in 1786. See *D.N.B.*, article on William Light, 1784-1838; colonel, and surveyor-general, South Australia.

<sup>3</sup> An unfounded rumour.

and I shall send by this Despatch a long Dissertation upon this subject in a separate Pacquet. It has been compiled by a military Gentleman, on whose Good sense, honor & Probity I have a perfect Reliance, and it stands with scarce an Alteration by my pen.<sup>1</sup> In truth to have put it into the form which I approved, I must have recomposed it, which I have not Time to do. You will observe that it is written with a freedom, which renders it improper for publication, but which will be more agreeable to You. Candour at the same Time demands, I should inform You, that it has not been communicated to any person in Bengal, and that I by no means pretend to be Master of the Subject; but the experience and Knowledge of Marquis Cornwallis, will supply the Remarks & Observations, I should have called for here upon it, if you could not have availed yourself of his Assistance. I mean however, if I can find Time, to add my own Comment on some leading Points.

Permit me to suggest to You the absolute Importance of an early and Attentive Consideration of this subject: there is a great fund of Dissatisfaction in the Army at present, and I understand that they have appointed Agents to superintend their Interests in Europe. I know it cannot be your Intention, that their Discontent or Representations should be silenced by the strong hand of Authority, and I would by no means recommend the attempt. To gratify the expectations of all, in their fullest extent is impossible, but I am of Opinion that an Arrangement may be formed, so as to consult their Interests & that of the public, and it is of the greatest Importance that it should be attempted on this principle. The Measures adopted by the Officers here, are conducted with Tranquillity moderation & firmness, but with anxious expectation of the Determination in Europe;

<sup>1</sup> This despatch consists of 110 manuscript pages. It deals in great detail with the abuses in the prevailing military system and outlines a scheme of reform based on the transfer of the Company's European regiments to the king's service and the abolition of all extra allowances.

they commenced before the Departure of Lord Cornwallis, and would have been pursued, if he had remained; nothing of course reaches me in my public Character, but what I privately learn, from indisputable Authority, affords me Conviction, that the Subject of the Arrangement of the Army cannot be treated with too much Caution, Candor, or Deliberation, and I shall be happy to learn that my Hints prove usefull.

I know not whether the Assam Business has attracted your Attention; I confess for my own Part, that I sincerely regret this Government ever interfered in it, & my present wish is to extricate ourselves from prosecuting our Interposition, as speedily as possible, without discredit, and if it can be effected, with some commercial Benefit. I have proposed a number of Queries to Captain Welsh commanding the detachment in that Country, in the hopes of bringing the Business to an issue: no inference must be drawn as to the Conduct I mean to pursue, which is perfectly open, notwithstanding any apparent Indication in the Queries.<sup>1</sup>

You once I recollect asked me, what was the Cause of Lord Cornwallis apparent dislike to Colonel Murray; he ever did Justice to the Colonel's public Zeal, of which as well as his Abilities I am equally convinced, and have derived great Assistance from both. His Lordship amongst his other Talents possessed in an eminent degree the Art of Conciliation and it is impossible to conduct public Business well without it. I endeavour to imitate him, and with respect to Colonel Murray<sup>2</sup> have succeeded; it was his Lordship's Advice to

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Captain Welsh's expedition to Upper Assam, see L. W. Shakespear, *History of Upper Assam, Upper Burmah, and North-Eastern Frontier* (London, 1914), pp. 54-60. Welsh went in Sept., 1792, and returned to Bengal, July, 1794. This author criticises Shore violently for recalling him.

<sup>2</sup> This is John Murray, created a baronet July 23, 1795, "late colonel in the Army, in the East India Company's service, and auditor-general in Bengal; m. Anne, dau. of Roderick MacLeod." See Debrett's *Baronetage* (1815, ed.), II, 1006. The family name was formerly MacGregor of Lanric, Perthshire.

me, which would have had weight with me, if my prepossessions had been different.

Colonel Duncan returns to Europe this Year; I have very little Acquaintance with him, but I am bound in Justice, to point him to your notice as a very respectable Officer, of unimpeachable Character. He knows no thing of this Communication, nor from his Connection with me, has any reason to suspect it.

It is my Intention to give you a summary of the political situation of India in a separate despatch, if Time permits; at all events our public Addresses will contain every material Occurrence.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd 1st Septem. 1794

V

*Private*

To the Right Honourable Henry Dundas

&ca &ca &ca

Dear Sir,

I have now the pleasure to transmit you the promised considerations on the present Establishment of the Army in Bengal, and on the future regulation of it, together with a very brief Abstract of the leading points, that you may form at one view a general Idea of the suggested Arrangements.

I must premise that both the Abstract and this Letter are the work of a day, and the Abstract is by no means intended to supersede the necessity of perusing the Original, which contains a variety of very essential observations, worthy attention. The Abstract of the remedial part is particularly defective, and the Original throughout must be consulted. I must also repeat what I have already mentioned that every allowance must be made for my inexperience on military Subjects; that I have not availed myself of any Communications with military Gentlemen, that the sub-

ject is discussed with a freedom, which would have been avoided if the Reflections had been intended to be laid before the public, and that referring to the Knowledge and Experience of Lord Cornwallis I have no Apprehension that any defects will pass unobserved.—With the fullest confidence in the ability, Honor and probity of the Gentleman who compiled this Dissertation I am sensible that an Arrangement of such extensive Importance, requires the collective experience of the best and ablest Officers and the fullest Deliberation both in India and Europe.

I shall now add some Observations which have occurred to me, and for which I intreat the same indulgence as for the plan in general. They are desultory, for I want time for the Method.

In the papers now sent you will find a connected plan and detail for the Arrangement of the Bengal Army. The Interests of the public as well as of Individuals are consulted in the Arrangement and both are affected by it. The whole must therefore be considered together, as the regulations are not meant to apply exclusively, to one side of the Question only.—This would be unfair, and I may venture to say, they could not be partially established. For Instance, the Abolition of the double full Batta now allowed to the Bengal Army, ought for the best reasons to take place, but if the proposed Compensation, or some other were not granted, we should find the Abolition very difficult & the attempt towards it hazardous; so in other instances; & the plan must be considered under this suggestion.

The Abolition of the Company's European Troops and the substitutions of his Majesty's Regiments, will I apprehend meet with much opposition in England, and I am acquainted with several Gentlemen in the Direction, some of whom are my particular friends, who have ever strenuously combated the proposition. I have considered it myself, and on this point have heard many Opinions which confirm my own, that the Arrangement is not only expedient but necessary, provided the Native Army be Kept distinct as pro-

posed. This I also consider a point of very great Consequence, and I think you will not easily discover any other Arrangement, that will at the same time provide an effective Army so constituted that the component parts shall duly balance each other, without augmenting the jealousies of the separate Corps.—

This Arrangement in my Idea, if effected as proposed, will be satisfactory both to his Majesty's and the Company's Officers.<sup>1</sup>

The superior advantages of Civil service have long been viewed with a jealous Eye by the military, and it has happened that those of the former have been augmented, whilst the Emoluments of the latter in various Instances of improper Commands have been diminished. This must ever be the Case; for no state can provide fortunes for all its subjects; but this Argument alone will not satisfy the feelings. Throughout India, the Civil Authority is at the Mercy of the Military, and the Controul over the latter does not stand upon such firm foundations as in Europe. The situation of Things here easily suggests the reflections arising from it; more than I should chuse to detail; I would wish to obviate the occurrence of such Reflections as far as possible, or at least to diminish their force by such an extension of rank and Emolument to the Officers, as may be compatible with the Funds & Interests of Government. This is attempted in the plan.

In discussing future regulation, an appeal must not be made to a standard drawn from the existing state of Things twenty Years ago. I have closely attended to the progress of Opinions in Bengal, and find them very different from what they were when I arrived in the Country. The Officers of the Bengal Army were formerly, comparatively speaking, easy thoughtless & indifferent. You will now find the juniors considerate, carefull and reflecting. They compare the past with the present, and the present with the future, and the result suggests little hope or Consolation. Nothing

<sup>1</sup> Part of this letter is printed in Shore Corr., I, 275-283.

appears to me more dangerous to society, and to such a society as that of this Country, as habitual Discontent. You will conclude that in this observation I carry my views beyond the present Time, to the possible operation of natural and obvious principles.

It is needless for me to expatiate on the services of the Army; History cannot perhaps shew more zeal, attachment, Fortitude & Forbearance, than were exhibited by the British Officers and Troops during the late War, they have on all occasions evinced their regard for the honor and interests of their Country, and I doubt not ever will.—They are intitled to one particular merit that though fully sensible of their services and exertions, they are never the subjects of Conversation; I never hear Details of Hardship endured, or of Dangers encountered, unless to gratify solicitations of Curiosity. But it is not in human nature to forget events of this Kind, and reflection does & will suggest Comparisons between their situation and their Services.

I beg you will do me the favour to consider that I am writing from Bengal where the Modes of thinking and social habits, are drawn from a state of Things which has no counterpart in Europe.

Many Officers have of late, resigned the Army, and have engaged in different professions. This is a Matter of no Consequence, unless the precedent should produce an extensive Imitation. But there is an example of another nature which I deem of a much more dangerous Tendency, I mean that of Duboigne who commands Sindia's Army. He has many Europeans under him, English amongst the rest. Doboigne [sic] was formerly an Officer on the Madras Establishment, which he quitted and came to Bengal an Adventurier—Some years ago an Officer of the Name of Lazun on this Establishment left the Army to try his fortunes in Hindustan. He was interested by Major Polier to establish his Authority over a Jagheer assigned to him by the King; he had collected a very excellent Corps, and

his success at first was great, but he lost the Fruits of it with his Life, by too great a Contempt for the Enemy.

Sindiah is certainly of a very different Character from that of the Powers of Hindustan in general and few amongst them will be induced to imitate his Conduct in the unbounded Confidence which he reposes in Duboigne, but if his and Lazun's examples become precedents of Imitation, the Consequences in time may be serious, and in all the Arrangements I look beyond the present moment, to the future Permanency of our Possessions in India.

If Practice had not been in opposition to the plainest reason, I should beg your excuse, for mentioning the absolute importance, that the Officers at the head of the Army, should ever be men of capacity Vigour and experience. You will conclude that I mean no reflections on General Sir Robert Abercromby.—Without reference therefore to him, I have only to request you will ask Lord Cornwallis' opinion on the Abilities of the Officers at the head of the Armies in Bengal Madras and Bombay, and what he supposes our situation would be if a War, which on every principle I from my heart deprecate, were to break out. Let him point out the men capable of conducting it, and possessing the confidence of their Brother Officers, and of the Troops in general. To the Advantages of high Rank, military Experience, indefatigable Zeal & Exertion and other Talents his Lordship joined the Influence of his civil character, and enjoyed and exercised a power, which could not be delegated to any other; and with less than this he would have found it difficult to have commanded equal success in the late War.—The plan proposes an Arrangement for removing disqualified Officers from the head of the Army (and for the Substitution of others) with an adequate compensation.

I am so sensible of the delicacy and importance of your Resolutions upon this subject, that you will I hope excuse my anxiety to give you all the information in my power. Whatever Emoluments or Accommodations can be permitted to the Officers, with a due regard to Discipline & Economy,



I strongly recommend; and if by a moderate sacrifice of æconomical Rigour the Concurrence of the Army in the proposed Arrangements can be conciliated, I shall think that object with such a sacrifice well obtained. The additional expence attending the proposed Arrangement, cannot I think exceed 12 lacs of Rupees; by the comparative Estimate herewith transmitted it is less.

I shall conclude this Address which is already too long, with some Reflections of a general Nature. They apply to the subject and to some propositions in my opinion of a dangerous Tendency, which I have heard.

The Medium through which our Dominion over twenty four Millions of people is established presents a singular phenomenon which has no parallel in History: Vizt. the Natives themselves trained to discipline by our Skill; and hitherto they have proved obedient, submissive, and attached to our Government & their Officers, in a degree not exceeded by any Troops in the World. It is unnecessary to expatiate upon what is so well Known, that these Natives are composed of Hindoos, or the followers of Brahma, and of Mahomedans; in a proportion perhaps of 100 of the former to twenty of the latter. The religious prejudices of each Sect are as opposite, as they are to the Christian Religion; but the attachment of both to the principles in which they have been educated is equally strong. The Hindoo satisfied with the possession of his own faith, has no intolerance nor a wish to make proselytes: the Mahomedan has more Zeal, mixed with a degree of contempt, not only for Hindoos, but for all other Religions. The former has various prejudices the observance of which he deems a point of honor as well as a tenet of his Creed; The latter has also some, but fewer. The prejudices of both will occasionally interfere with strict attention to Military discipline. In their habits, the Hindu is temperate, parsimonious and saving: the Mahomedan free, profuse, with a disposition to debauchery.

But it is of the last importance to Know the Means by

which the two Sects have been consolidated into a Mass which forms the bulwark of our power, without violence to the prejudices of either ; and how the body composite has been trained to a sufficient degree of Military subordination, that we may not, by intemperate arrangements, suggested by Systems modelled and perfected under a different state of things counteract those principles which have been adopted & pursued with so much success in this Country. The explanation may be comprized in a few Words, by consulting, to a certain extent the Interests & feelings of our Military Subjects.

The former is consulted in the high pay which a Sepoy receives, and which is not only sufficient for his personal Maintenance but affords a surplus for the exigencies of his family, and often for accumulation ; & in the regularity with which that Pay is issued.

The Second by an indulgence to his habits, and prejudices, whether religious, or otherwise ; and for this purpose the severity of discipline is occasionally relaxed, but in no case where the relaxation is prejudicial.

Desertion is often connived at ; the Sepoys are left undisturbed in the celebration of their Holidays and ceremonies ; in the event of embarkation, every devisable precaution is taken to guard and preserve their Casts and prejudices ; and imputed delinquency, under some restrictions as to the Nature of the Crime, is tried by Court Martials formed of themselves. I shall add here what I allow in strictness not applicable to the present Argument that the Constitution of the Sepoy Corps is such as to flatter the pride of the Natives by gradations of rank, which confers no dangerous power.

But independently of the above considerations, as arising out of the System, much must be attributed to the discretion and attention of the Sepoy Officers to the prejudices and habits of their men, which they, in general I believe, consider as a part of their duty : and without this attention, I may venture to say, that the indulgence of the Ruling power would lose half its efficacy. To suppose the reverse will fur-

nish the proof of the affirmative—If the officers at the time they allow the Sepoys to perform the ceremonials of their religion were to ridicule them, or refuse their countenance to them; the bond of attachment would be soon dissolved, and disaffection and Aversion be substituted for subordination.

The professional pride of a Bengal Sepoy is much greater than that of most European soldiers; and the cause of it may in a great degree be traced to the Arbitrary principles of a despotic Government, which depending on the Military for support, raised them above their level. This pride, properly flattered and directed, may be moulded into a spirit, that shall render the exercise of a strict discipline often unnecessary, and into an Attachment not to be shaken.

To conclude—the Native Army may be compared to a two edged Weapon of a good but delicate temperament: it is fit for all purposes of Utility: do not aim at too great perfection in its temperament, lest you should destroy its edge, or break it into splinters that shall wound the maker of the Experiment.

Admitting the preceding Remarks to be just, it follows that none should be intrusted with the command of Sepoys, but those who have been educated amongst them; lest authority, acting from ignorance and prejudice, should loosen the ties of subordination. The Sepoys will naturally respect those who respect them. They will go farther, they will, whilst other Motives combine to promote it, imbibe an attachment mixed with some degree of gratitude for indulgences granted, by men of a persuasion different from themselves. They will, on the contrary, detest those who act upon opposite Views.

If any one from folly, prejudice, or ignorance of mankind, should be so hardy as to consider the attachment to their prejudices in the Natives of this Country, as preposterous, absurd and subversive of Military discipline; and, in this persuasion, entertain an idea of dissolving it, I would wish him to reflect, that he would then attempt to destroy a

principle, which duly supported & attended to, is a security for subordination and fidelity:—We should deem it fortunate that we can avail ourselves of such an instrument, as long as we can give their prejudices a proper direction, & preserve a Controul over them sufficient for all purposes of discipline.

There was a period when an attempt to transport the Sepoys by sea, excited a Mutiny. Of late years their aversion to a Sea voyage is much diminished—The Change was not effected by force; but by conciliating and consulting their prejudices.

But I would not recommend this or any other experiment which strongly opposes their prejudices to be repeated without absolute Necessity.—disaffection, once excited by such an opposition, would be the most dangerous possible—It is certainly the wisest mode to avoid the risque of the experiment. These reflections suggest the Recollection of a proposition which some have insinuated—that the Armies of the three Presidencies shall be incorporated into one Mass, and the component Troops be considered no longer as attached to one Presidency, but as liable to be employed wherever the Government may chuse.

Upon what reasoning this proposition has been made, I am not informed; possibly upon this idea, that the Troops habituated in time of peace to these removals and changes, may be ready to submit to them, without reluctance, in the exigency of War. To this Argument I oppose what has been said and I trust it will be found incontrovertible.

Let it be remembered too that the Sepoys on the Coast and at Bombay have not the same respectability in point of Cast as the Bengal Sepoys: that the latter, on this account, despise the two former; and that the transition from contempt on one side, to hate on the other, is not only easy, but certain: the consequence must be enmity and perhaps more. In the Zeal & activity of service, these principles may be absorbed for a while; but would soon burst out, if the opportunity for it were often afforded. More has already been

done than could be expected; but we must not, on that account, overlook the effects of Passion incorporated in the human frame.

But perhaps it may be intended that the Officers only are to be removed. The objections however, even to this, are strong—the proposition supposes that the Bengal Sepoys are occasionally to be placed under the Commanding officers of the Madras or Bombay Establishments; that is under the Command of those who are ignorant of their language, manners & Habits, and who, having been used to Sepoys without the same Habits or prejudices of those of Bengal, would be but too apt to think an attention to them unnecessary: and at all events would be, by their ignorance of those Habits and prejudices, precluded from showing it. The remark is surely a decisive objection. With respect to the Measure there are other arguments that offer against it, which principally respect the Officers themselves. That the Command of the Army in India would become a System of patronage; of favour sometimes, and of enmity at other; that the Officers would be needlessly harassed by trouble and expence; be separate from their families & connections, when it was unnecessary; and their local experience be rendered nugatory, by transferring them to situations where new experience is to be acquired. An arrangement adopted in opposition to these objections ought to have very strong reasons in support of it, nor is it necessary; The Officers are ever ready to go where order'd; but in the Arrangement which as a declared Regulation I object to; they would see more Inconvenience than could be intended.

I shall not extend these remarks much farther, but close them with one observation.

The Sepoys of Bengal form a body of men strongly attached to us by professional habits; and in this country professions are hereditary: their Children are bred up in the expectations of imitating their fathers—This attachment to their professions has in great Measure the same force as that to their prejudices, destroy the one and you

annihilate the other. The appropriation of lands for the maintenance of invalid Seapoys was one of the wisest Measures ever adopted by this Government, Lord Cornwallis with his usual Judgement consolidated & improved the plan; & the Villages where the Invalids reside, abound with young recruits, the future Defenders of the British Authority in Hindustan.

I beg leave further to submit to your Consideration the propriety of allowing a certain Discretion to this Government, in executing the proposed Arrangements.

I know not whether you will think the Freedom of my remarks requires an Apology; I have only to say that it has been so much encouraged by the Liberality of your Conduct towards me, that in giving my statements without reserve, I think I best fulfill your expectations & the Suggestions of my public Duty.

I have the honor to be . . .

Reced. July 1794

## VI

BENGAL

Jany. 15. 1794

Private,  
Dear Sir,

You will think that I have already written to You too much by this dispatch, but I must still add a few Lines.

I sincerely hope the bulk of my military Dispatch, will not deter You from an Attention to the Subject; I have studied your Ease, at the expense of my own in some degree, by an Abstract of the more voluminous papers, but the detail of the Arrangement cannot possibly be understood, without a careful perusal of the Subject at large. I know none that at present more claims it.

Permit me also to add something in favour of Colonel Murray. He is a most usefull, zealous, and active public servant, and I deem myself peculiarly fortunate in having

the benefit of his Assistance, which I hope I shall not lose during my residence in India. But when I consider the very important, and invidious office, which he holds, the magnitude & success of his exertions, his invariable Attention to Oeconomy and the Interests of the Company, and his Ability, I have no hesitation in giving you my Opinion, that he is entitled to a larger Salary than that which he receives, and I think it might be augmented by adding to it, the Table Allowance which the Colonels in general have. His rank is personal not official, and the Allowance may be granted as such, in reward for his beneficial services. If a public Document were required, as a ground for confirming it, I have only to refer to a Minute recorded by Colonel Murray, on the Proceedings of the Military Board, at Fort William on the 27th February 1792.

I have requested Mr. Charles Grant to mention to You Captain Mitchell and the other Commanders of the squadron which we fitted out. They undertook the service with much Zeal, and spirit, & I have only to hope, that as their private Interests have already suffered, from their Detention in this Country, that they will not farther lose the Advantages, which they would have been entitled to, with respect to their future Voyages, in consequence of an earlier Arrival.

Mr. Scawin stands as successor to Colonel Murray, in case of a vacancy, and I acknowledge I should have great reluctance in obeying the Orders of the Honble Court for his succession; but my reluctance would submit to duty. Mr. Scawin has not I believe been in Calcutta since my Arrival, and his appointment may be considered as a Supersession of a Man in every respect equal to the office of Military Auditor General, and who has already evinced his Capacity. I mean Lieut Gen Robertson.

I see no Embarrassment from any Quarter, excepting Owde, under our existing Engagements with the Vizier. There is a great difficulty in restoring the Affairs of his desolated Territories. His Minister and acting Minister, have the most rooted aversion to each other, and supposing

them to be upon good Terms, they would want weight & Influence with the Vizier, for any effectual Reform. I shall however push it as far as I can. I have the honor to send to your Address, a sketch of the Jarghire assigned by Sindiah to Mr. Duboisne.

I have made my Military Letter a private Address, leaving it to your Judgement to decide upon the propriety and necessity of making any part, or the whole of it public. But I trust I am warranted in addressing it to you officially, as the packet is to all purposes of a public nature.

I take the Liberty of offering through you my respects to Mr. Pitt, & of aprising you both, that my public Conduct as far as my Judgement goes, shall never disgrace the good Opinion You have honoured me with.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd 1 Sept. 1794

## VII

March 10 1794

*Private*

The Right Honourable Henry Dundas &ca

Dear Sir,

I will not lose any of the very little Time, I have to write, in long Apologies, but communicate all that I deem material in as few Words as I can.

Sindiah died at Poonah on the 12th February, without suspicion of Poison: considering his unbounded Ambition, extensive Abilities, and indefatigable perseverance, in the pursuit of political Objects, I deem this event favourable to the Interests of the Company at present. What may hereafter be the result, I cannot pretend to foresee, but I do not apprehend any Commotions or events that will disturb our Government.

The Hostage princes <sup>1</sup> are at liberty to return, and I shall

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the members of Tippoo's family given as hostages under the treaty arrangements at the end of the War in 1792.



deem it fortunate if Tippoo Sultaun, will afford any opening for stationing a resident at his Capital. There is some little Embarrassment with regard to the Nizam, the Circumstances of which I will summarily mention. He has a Claim, whether well or ill founded I cannot determine, upon certain Villages in the Possession of Tippoo, and immediately preceding the Arrival of Intelligence, that the third and last Kist had been paid to the Peshwah, the Nizam's Minister wrote to Tippoo, demanding these Villages and entering a caveat, against the return of the Princes previous to the surrender of the Villages. The Vakeels of Tippoo at Madras, declined communicating the Minister's Letter to their Master, and wrote an expostulatory Answer. I in the mean Time, addressed a Letter to Tippoo, in consequence of the Nizam's Objections, which I deemed a bar against the Restoration of the Hostages; this Letter was transmitted to the Madras Government, and at the same [time] I wrote to our Resident at Hyderabad, directing him to urge as from himself, such Arguments as I deemed calculated to induce the Nizam to withdraw his Objections. Before these Instructions could reach him, We received a Letter from Sr J. Kennaway, stating, that provided this Government were satisfied, that the Claims for the Villages would be amicably terminated, and provided that they approved the Measure, the Nizam had no objection to the immediate return of the Hostage princes: a Copy of this Letter was sent at the same Time by Sr J. Kennaway to Madras, & the Government there deemed the Nizam's Acquiescence so compleat that they declined delivering my Letter to Tippoo, & Lieut Steuart who had intermediately succeeded to the temporary Charge of the Residency at Hyderabad, in consequence of the Nizam's conditional Acquiescence, waved the Communication of the Arguments which I suggested. Captain Kirkpatrick, Successor to Sr J. Kennaway, by what misled I know not, has understood the Acquiescence in a different Light, and acting upon the Instructions which I gave to his Predecessor, the Communication

of which had been suspended by Lieut Steuart, has been endeavouring to obtain a more formal Consent from the Nizam. Nothing can be clearer than the Terms of Sr J. Kennaway's Letter stating the Nizam's Acquiescence, and the Writer was at Madras to correct any Misinterpretation if it had existed. Truth & sincerity are not very conspicuous in the Nizam's Politics, and he may possibly remonstrate against our Determination, on a plea that he had objected to the return of the Hostages, but we have argument & Good faith to oppose to him, and I shall exert the Influence of this Government to accelerate the Termination of his litigated Claims with Tippoo, who appears friendly & fairly disposed.

The Burmas, or Aksas, have entered the Company's Territories at Chatigong [sic], claiming the Restitution of certain Persons, who have for many Years resided under our Protection, on the ground that they have been plundering Aracan: this Country some Years ago was subdued by the King of Pegu, whose subjects are called Burmas. I refer You to our official Communications for particulars; what I conclude is this, that the Pegu Government, means to enforce as far as it can, the Requisition which it has made; you will I hope find our reply just, moderate & firm: The Pegu Government is powerful, but it can never send any Army of Consequence into the Company's Territories and the Invaders I trust will soon be repulsed.<sup>1</sup>

The Force of the French at the Islands is alarming, and their privateers have committed great Depredations on our Trade: it is rather surprizing that they have not done more Mischief; I can add nothing to the particulars of the Intelligence, which was collected from different Persons who left Mauritius in December, and has been officially transmitted. But if the War continues You will see the necessity of ordering a naval force to India, and indeed we have long been in daily expectation of its Arrival. Our Arma-

<sup>1</sup> *Cambridge History of India*, V, 558.

ment which was expected on the 20th February, is not yet returned from the Eastward, and I hope it has not met with the two Frigates, fitting out at Mauritius in December; the delay may be accounted for, by the long Passages of the Country Ships, which have lately arrived from the Straits of Malacca. But whatever Consequences may happen to the Squadron, the Intelligence under which we acted when it was ordered upon service, afforded no grounds for Apprehension, that it would not be superior to any force it would probably cope with, and the Merits of the Determination, can only be fairly tried by the Circumstances under which we acted.<sup>1</sup>

I hope you have received my military Despatches by the five ships which left Madras on the 20th February, and permit me to recommend to You an early, dispassionate Consideration of this important Subject. The Officers of the Army in India, consider/very unjustly I am convinced/Lord Cornwallis inimical to their Interests, and apprehend that the military Arrangement for this Country will take place before their Representations can be attended to. Under this Impression they have read the Queries which he proposed to several Officers on the Army, and see in them, objects unfavourable to themselves. There are a few, and very few, who are violent, and endeavour to foment Dissatisfaction but the Majority is actuated by more moderate Sentiments and wait with Tranquillity the expected Determination in Europe. They have I understand had it in Contemplation to address this Government, but that Intention is for the present suspended. I apprehend nothing from the violence of the few, but the Temper of the Army is not disposed to bear with harsh resolutions. I do not upon Reflection, see any reason to alter my proposed Arrangements, and I sincerely hope they will assist your Deliberation & Determination. I shall not communicate my

<sup>1</sup> The squadron returned shortly afterwards; for its work in the Indian Seas, see William James, *Naval History of Great Britain*, I, 218 ff.

Propositions to any, & they have been seen by none but my confidential Assistants. The Officers in general I believe, suppose me friendly to their Interests, and that I have a respect for the Army ; my Addresses to You will prove that this Opinion is not unfounded, and I leave the Impression to operate, without publishing my plans or Sentiments.

The Directors may possibly be disappointed in their expectation of the return of the Vessels sent to the Eastward ; but if all the Indiamen dispatched should arrive safe, the Cargoes will I understand exceed a Crore & twenty Lacs of Rupees,<sup>1</sup> a sum more than sufficient to compleat the stipulations in the Act of Parliament.

We have now been near nine months without any official Intelligence from Europe, but we learnt yesterday by an American Vessel, which left the Douns about the Middle of October, that War still prevails. I need not expatiate on the necessity of regular & particular Communications during the Continuance of Hostilities, & hope you will afford some Attention to the Means of making it. My health is as good as I could expect, but I will not assert that my Abilities are equal to the arduous Duties of my Situation. You may rely upon my Zeal, Honesty & Industry, and that I will not disgrace the Honour of your Patronage in these respects.

I have the Honor to be . . .

## VIII

BENGAL  
May 16 1794

Private  
Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 17th October No. 3, & of duplicates of Nos 1 & 2.

The last week was a period of anxious and important Deliberation, and I have in common with my Council taken

<sup>1</sup> 12,000,000 rupees.

upon myself very serious responsibility, the execution of orders for an Expedition against Mauritius which you will more particularly learn from our Address to the Secret Committee. I am not without Confidence that the reasons which have so forcibly operated my Conviction, will obtain your Approbation, for which I am not a little sollicitous; and at all counts, I trust to your Indulgence for yielding to a Conviction, which it would have been criminal to resist, whilst any discretion was left to us. You will see the Impropriety of my being more explicit in this Address, and I shall only therefore refer to our official Letter, which contains all the explanations I can offer. Having done my duty conscientiously, I have no alarms as to the consequences, but I should have had few hours free from apprehension, if I had implicitly obeyed in their full extent, those Orders to which I here allude. Fortunately the Question is of a nature, that precludes the possibility of any Imputation as to my Motives, whatever Opinion may be formed of my Judgement, and I shall conclude the subject with an Assurance, that in acting up to my own Conviction, I have resisted my Wishes, and every Motive that could have influence with me.<sup>1</sup>

On the state of the Army in Bengal, I have written to Mr. Grant, I am happy to find that the Officers at Madras & Futteygur,<sup>2</sup> disapprove the Intemperance of the remarks on the Queries proposed by Lord Cornwallis, which have been printed & circulated in Bengal. A Copy shall be sent to You, if I can procure one.

I have also mentioned to Mr Grant, as well as to Sr F. Baring,<sup>3</sup> my anxious wish that a successor should be ap-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the expedition sent out under Commodore Newcombe which had a rather inglorious career and was beaten off by the French in October, 1794. See Albert Pitot, *L'Ile de France*, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> Modern spelling: Fatehgarh.

<sup>3</sup> Founder of the famous banking house which bears his name. Director of East India Company 1779; chairman 1792-93. Whig M.P. for Grampound 1784-90, Chipping Wycombe 1794-96, 1802-06; Calne 1796-1802. See *D.N.B.*

pointed, so as to arrive in Bengal, in January or February, 1796, and from the very high Estimation in which I hold Lord Hobart's Abilities, I should be happy to learn that he were the Person selected. A sound Constitution, and good health are essential Qualifications for a Governor General, and from the best Calculation I can make of my own health, I cannot expect to preserve any tolerable portion of it, longer than the Period which I have stated. Lord Cornwallis, has I doubt not informed You, of the necessity of appointing a successor to me, as Mr Speke who stands next to me, is from the perpetual recurrence of Indisposition even more disqualified than I am.

The Death of Sr William Jones<sup>1</sup> has occasioned a Vacancy in the supreme Court of Judicature. I have no person to recommend in this Country; Moderation of Character, & Liberality of Sentiment, are Qualities peculiarly requisite in those who are appointed Judges.

The Armament which we fitted out for the protection of the Commerce of India, is not returned, and unless it should soon arrive, I shall be apprehensive about its safety. Supposing Mitchell to have proceeded southerly, from the point of his eastern Destination, Sincapore, he was not to be expected in Bengal before the Middle of this month. I have no apprehensions therefore on the score of delay, but on account [of] the very large Force of the French, to the Eastward, which is reported to consist of two Frigates the Sybele & Prudente, & several Cruisers of great strength. I candidly acknowledge that my expectation of Approbation from the Direction, for our exertions in equipping this Armament, was never sanguine, and if Misfortune should attend it, I shall fear Censure, but the Measure was necessary & expedient under the existing Circumstances, and the

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Jones, 1746-94. Famous as Oriental Scholar; Judge of the High Court of Calcutta. Shore was his great friend and admirer, and, when in retirement, wrote *The Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Correspondence of Sir William Jones*, London, J. Hatchard, 1804.

Testimony of the Merchants here & Bombay, will establish its Utility.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to the internal Administration of Bengal, with better health, I should have done more, but March & April were months of Indisposition, & Incapacity to me. My object as I proposed to You, was to establish and consolidate Lord Cornwallis' Regulations, and I have pursued it.

I have the Honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Nancy Packet

—March 95

## IX

BENGAL

June 12 1794

Dear Sir,

Since my Address to you of the 16th ultimo, our Anxiety for carrying into execution the Orders of his Majesty's Ministers & the secret Committee, as well as the Importance of the Object, have induced us to augment in a considerable Degree the Number of Europeans required for the expedition. There was one reason which most forcibly influenced my Deliberations of the 9th May although I could not venture to expatiate upon it in the public proceedings; nor shall I mention it farther at present, than by a reference to the long military Letter which I had the Honor to send you: it relates but to the capacity of our officers at the head of the Army for conducting a War.

The supplies of provisions required by the President in Council at Madras are nearly shipped & will be dispatched in a day or two.

For some days I have been much indisposed, but not sufficiently to prevent me attending to material Business.

I have the honor to be . . .

Recd. per —

1st August 1795

<sup>1</sup> See Albert Pitot, *L'Ile de France*, pp. 180 ff.

## X

BENGAL

August 21, 1794.

Private

Dear Sir,

Our public Advices communicated by this despatch are so full, that I can add nothing to them: you will have the satisfaction of learning from them, that your Estimates of the resources of Bengal have been amply verified, and that the Receipts from the four grand Sources of Revenue, the Land, Salt, Opium & Customs, exhibit a proof of increasing resources. The Credit of Government is good, the 8 P Cent Notes bear a premium, and I this day gave Orders for the purchase of 6 P Cent Notes at a discount of  $1\frac{1}{4}$  P Cent only. The only embarrassment which interrupts Government, is a Batta or discount exacted upon the Exchange of Gold into Silver, and which from the Introduction of the Gold into Circulation, has been transferred from the Metropolis to the Country at large. It remains to see whether a more compleat Circulation of the Gold, which has not yet been thoroughly established, will check the evil.

I have too much reason to fear that the Mahrattas & Nizam will go to war, although I am not without hopes, that their Contests will be reconciled without Hostilities, by Concessions on the part of the Nizam. There is a strong personal Animosity between his Minister & Balajee Pundit. The former is vain, presumptuous, fickle, and insincere; the latter cool wary firm, and sensible of his own superiority both in the Cabinet & the field. I never expected much from our Mediation, which has been interposed, as the Mahrattas are well aware of the limitations under which it can be urged, and if these limitations did not exist, I should be still disinclined to run the risque of a War with the Peshwah for the purpose of supporting the tottering fabric of the Nizam's Government, which is ready to fall from its own Weakness. The Mahratta Influence over the



Nizam's Country, is so incorporated with the internal Administration, that it would require uncommon Abilities, Energy and Perseverance to destroy it; & as it exists the Nizam can scarcely be called an independant Prince. The latest Communication on this subject accompanies my Address to the Court of Directors.<sup>1</sup>

You will observe the Conclusion of it solicits the Appointment of a successor. If I consulted my personal Interests only, I should have wished to remain in Bengal, untill the end of 1796, but I see no prospect at present of being able to continue untill the end of 1795: without any particular Complaint I feel an increasing Debility, which augments my Anxiety for the success of my Administration, whilst it diminishes my Ability to insure it. My health would be sufficient for the situation of second, but not for the supreme station. In the friendship of my Colleagues I have every support, & nothing but a sense of duty suggests the intention of returning to England. By that alone, my determination will be formed. The Arrival of Lord Hobart with a nomination to succeed me, will relieve my mind from embarrassment, and nothing but absolute Disqualification shall induce me to relinquish the Charge of the Government to Mr Speke. My Administration conscious as I am of a want of power to discharge it as I wish, will not I trust disgrace your Nomination of me, in my Application to relinquish it, I have consulted what I think due to your Reputation and my own.

The death of Lieut Colonel Sears, will I believe promote Major Bruce, whom you recommended to me.

I have the honor to be . . .

Recd. per Nancy Packet

—March 1795

<sup>1</sup> Part of this letter has been printed in Shore Corr., I, 298.

## XI

August 25 1794

Dear Sir,

The Officers of the Army have transmitted an Address to the Court of Directors, which has been presented to Government with the Consent of the Commander in Chief. You will find my Opinion has already anticipated some of their requests, which notwithstanding the exceptional Terms in two [or] three parts of the Address, will I hope be attended to. My remarks upon other passages will be short.

By the authentic Documents referred to, the Queries proposed by Lord Cornwallis are meant. The Conclusion inferring Indisposition in him, is a mere perversion of what he certainly thought fair, and candid.

The subscribers seem to have forgotten that they hold Commissions from his Majesty at their own Sollicitation, and do not sufficiently consider themselves Servants of the state.

The Objections to a general Transfer of the Company's Officers to his Majesty's Service are forcibly urged, on the supposition of an Intention to relieve the different Corps regularly from Europe. The Officers now attached to the Company's European Regiments would be hardly sufficient to compleat the Seapoy Corps in Officers. If the former however were actually transferred to the Seapoy Corps, if that Corps were permanent, & distinct from every other, & if the Officers were to rise therein by Seniority; and if a proportionate number of General Officers & Colonels were appointed to the native Corps, I think there would be no grounds for Complaint.

If the Relief of the Artillery & Engineers should be deemed expedient, the Officers ought to have rank equal to their Commands & in the same degree with his Majesty's Officers serving in those Corps at Woolwich.

I think all the Arguments against the Separation of the native Corps, very feeble.

To the Idea of blending in one Mass the native Corps at the different Presidencies, I have already opposed the strongest Arguments.

Partiality in a despotic disregard of Claims &c are indecent & injudicious Epithets.

The Address upon the whole, notwithstanding the impropriety of some parts, is more moderate than I expected it to be. The Debates at some of the meetings have been very intemperate, but the ferment of momentary passion has subsided into milder representation. Yet if it had been presented to me in the first Instance without the Consent of the Commander in Chief, I think I should have returned it for amendment. Sr Robt Abercrombie's Acquiescence precludes all Objections on my part. Few of the Officers appear to me to have read with Attention your Sentiments on the military Establishments in India. I feared that I had been too voluminous in my Communications to You on this important Subject, but I am now happy that they were so ample. I saw nothing of the address untill it was publickly presented.

I am anxiously waiting for Intelligence from Owde, to ascertain whether the Murder of Mahomed Ali the eldest Son of the late Fyzeullah Khan, was by the Connivance & support of a Party, or otherwise & whether the Rohilla's who are a turbulent violent disaffected Body, are disposed to support Golum Ali in his Usurpation or otherwise: nothing has been received since the public Account, communicated to the Court.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Nancy Packet

—March—1795

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the disturbance in Rohilkhand, put down by Sir Robert Abercromby, see Mill, *History of British India*, VI, 46.

## XII

## No 1

December 31. 1794

Private &amp; Secret

The Right Honble Henry Dundas

&amp;c &amp;c

Dear Sir,

I have had the honor to receive your several Letters from No. 1 to 5 inclusive, and shall in future attend to your Recommendations for numbering my Addresses to You.

Our public Dispatches from the Political, Military Financial & judicial Departments are so full, not to mention my Address to the Court of Directors, that I shall not trouble You with Details on subjects which you will have officially before You—

You are apprized of my Sentiments respecting Sr Robert Abercromby. As a man of honor & unimpeachable Integrity, Zealous for the public good, and anxious as far as he can to promote it, I respect him; as an amicable Member of society I esteem him, but I am bound by duty to mention to You, that I deem his Abilities totally inadequate to the station of Commander in Chief. Called forth by unexpected Necessity into exertion, his Conduct has so lowerd his Character for Capacity, with the Army, that they speak of him with Contempt. Oderint dum metuant is at least a safe maxim, but Contempt is the worst Enemy a Man in a public situation can encounter. I give you these sentiments with reluctance, but as the safety of India may eventually depend on the Abilities of the Commander in Chief, common Honesty forbids me to withhold a Communication of so much Importance. I am sorry to add, that amongst the Colonels of this Establishment, & the Case is I fear too general throughout India, I know not one equal to the Conduct of a War, and if the Mahrattas or Tippoo were to attack Us, we should be in a deplorable situation. Report indeed

speaks well of the Abilities of Colonel Stuart<sup>1</sup> on the Coast, and his Reflections prove him to possess Abilities, but he has had no Opportunity of bringing them to a Test on a great Scale. The proceedings of the Government will shew You that I have in fact been compelled to stand forward, on some points of military Duty, where the Commander in Chief ought to have taken the lead: your own Reflections will supply whatever I could add upon this subject.

You have relieved me from great Embarassment by the nomination of a successor. Since the arrival of Lady Shore, I have recovered my health in a degree, which has astonished my friends as well as myself, every hour contributes to the Improvement of it. If this Alteration had not taken place I should have deemed it a point of Conscience, to resign the Government to Lord Hobart, and you would yourself have condemned me, if I had hesitated; at present and as long as I can conduct the Business to my own satisfaction, & that of my superiors I have relinquished all thoughts of returning to England. My past Conduct will I trust justify my assurance, that private Considerations will never weigh with me, against a Sense of Duty & Propriety.

I have at Lord Hobart's request, & with the heartiest Inclination on my side, commenced a confidential Correspondence with him, and he is welcome to any Advice or Information which I can furnish, at all Times. I could wish that his Lordship, had previously Consulted me in the appointment of Mr Adderley, to the Post of Master Attendant, as I fear the Court of Directors will not be pleased with his Conduct in this Instance. It is impossible to approve it. By Report also, I learn that his Lordship has nominated as Military Officer, Sheriff. This is also improper, and the public Voice in both Instances con-

<sup>1</sup> Probably James Stuart, 1741-1815, promoted to a colonelcy 8 August, 1792. Maj.-General, 26 Feb., 1795, in charge of operations in Ceylon, 1795-96. Commander-in-Chief, Madras, later Commander-in-Chief, Bombay. See Haydn's *Book of Dignities*.

demns his Lordships Appointments. With respect to the public Measures of his Administration, I hear of no disapprobation, and as far as I am acquainted with him, have no ground of Dissatisfaction.

Although I have not been able to reduce my political Reflections to the form, in which my first Communication was transmitted, the Omission may be supplied by a Minute, which I wrote immediately subsequent to the Intelligence of Sindiah's Death, and by another on the state of the Negotiations between the Mahrattas & Nizam, this latter is nearly transcribed in our Address from the political Department.

I am happy to find that the Conduct of the Gentlemen at Bombay has attracted your Censure as well as that of the Court of Directors, and am anxious for the Arrival of Duncan's Appointment.<sup>1</sup> He will have an arduous Task to reform the abuses of that Presidency; but he possesses Zeal & Application equal to any Labour, & Duty. Duncan is entitled to & possesses my unreserved Confidence; this is due to his Zeal, Abilities, & Integrity; in one point only, I think him weak, in his Judgement upon Characters; his partiality to his friends, does not permit him to see their Defects, and his Goodnature requires a little check. I will not affirm myself to be Exempt, from the Imperfections which I point out in his Character, but I deem it of importance to communicate my Sentiments in this respect, that you may know the real Characters of those entrusted with the Administration in India.

I shall be particularly attentive to communicate to You at the earliest possible periods, any statements or Documents which I may deem of use to You.

Lord Cornwallis' System has imposed an additional load of Business on this Government; but it has been fairly and

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Jonathan Duncan; he remained Governor of Bombay until 1811, an unusually long record for an Indian governorship at this period; well-known for his honesty, and efficiency.

successfully established: if in any part it appears to me defective, it is in the Police. I beg however to be understood as speaking with hesitation on this point, as I suspect, what I have not yet been thoroughly able to ascertain, that the Violations of the Peace are not more numerous than they were, but that they are brought more forward to observation.

Independantly of the Arrangements made in Europe respecting the Army much is wanted here: the Troops are so much detached, that it would be difficult in any sudden Emergency to collect a body of 3000 Men, in any part of the Provinces Calcutta, excepted. This must not be permitted, but I fear the Remedy will require some additional expense. It is my wish to consult the Commander in Chief on the subject, & I shall address You hereafter upon it, as well as upon the situation of the Government with respect to the supreme Court of Judicature.

The unfortunate Rohillah Business, has prevented my Importunity with the Vizier in the Arrangements of his own Dominions: if I could be spared from the Presidency, and if I had reason to believe that my presence & Advice would induce the Vizier to adopt a solid & rational System of Administration, I should not decline the Journey; but his Character is almost an insuperable Bar to all expectation of Improvement.

Our Newspapers in Calcutta have of late assumed a licentiousness, too dangerous to be permitted in this Country. I have ordered one of the Editors to be sent to Europe; his name is William Duane, and I think You will agree with me, that his Conduct did not entitle him to the Protection of the Company: he addressed a Letter to me, in Terms of Intimidation, and as he had long been ordered to return to Europe, he was apprehended & confined to the Fort by my Directions.

I shall be happy to shew every Attention in my Power to the Gentlemen, whom You have recommended to me;

but many must I fear be disappointed of any essential Assistance.

I have the honor to be . . .

P.S. I beg leave to recommend to your Notice the success & Zeal of Captain Mitchell who commanded the Bengal Squadron.

Rec'd July 1795.

### XIII

Private No 2

February 7th 1795

Dear Sir;

With a duplicate of my Letter No 1 I have again the honor to address you.

Nothing of Importance has occurred since the date of my former letter; Hostilities between the Peshwah and Nizam, are not yet commenced, although both parties continue their preparations for War, which if it should actually take place, will not I conceive be of long duration. I have entered very fully into a consideration of the possible Consequences of Hostilities, & have particularly discussed a Question, which may eventually arise; viz: Whether in the event of a War, between the Mahrattas and the Nizam, and the Interference of Tippoo, against the Nizam, we are bound by Treaty to defend him. My reflections on this important Question, which I do not think, will be forced upon our Decision, are not yet sufficiently compleat for transmission by this dispatch, but the Result of my determination after an attentive review of all that preceded the Guaranty treaty, and of all that has passed since the peace, is at present this, that We are not bound by any existing Treaty to defend either the Nizam or Mahrattas, against an Attack of Tippoo, without joint cooperation of both. The question of expediency still remains, and a doubt arises, under the Restrictions of the Legislature, whether we should be justified in acting upon it: we were



not bound by the Terms of any existing Treaty, to defend the Rajah of Travancore,<sup>1</sup> but the former Treaty of peace with Tippoo, placed him specifically under our protection; and the Relative situation of that Rajah & the Nizam, is very similar, as far as regards the principle of an authorized Interference. This is a point, on which we should be instructed, at present however, I am little disposed either to admit the Obligation or expediency of our Interference in favour of either of our Allies against Tippoo whilst at War with each other.

With a view to the extension of Commerce, I have deputed a Native to Napaul with Merchandize; the Attempt is made upon so moderate a scale, that the Loss will be trifling even if it should entirely fail; but I have better hopes. I have also determined to dispatch an Agent to the Court of Ava, for Reasons, which are too long to detail in this place, but they are fully stated on the public proceedings, and I mention the subject only that it may attract your Notice.<sup>2</sup> I beg leave also to call your particular Attention to my Remarks & decision on a proposed Establishment at New Guinea.

The Appointments for the introduction of the judicial System at Benares have not yet taken place; some Confusion has arisen in our own provinces, from the establishment of the System previous to the publication of the Regulations for the execution of it; I wish to avoid a Recurrence of the same Inconvenience in Benares, and to afford Time to Duncan, to arrange Matters in that province as compleatly as possible, previous to the Introduction of the new System there, which at all events must soon take place.

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the circumstances which had brought about war with Tippoo in 1790. See *Cambridge History of India*, V, 335.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Michael Symes's reports on Burma appear to have been gross exaggerations, and his treaty was not regarded as binding by the Burmese. See his own work, *An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava*. . . . Cf. Hiram Cox's *Journal of a Residence in the Burmhan Empire* (London, 1821).

The continuance of my Correspondence with Lord Hobart, enables me to form a more accurate Judgement of his public Measures & to augur from them, that his Administration will be creditable, and beneficial.

I think it my duty to point out to your particular Notice the Zeal & Attention of Commodore Rainier,<sup>1</sup> he duly apprizes me of all his Operations, & does me the honor to consult me upon them; as long as he remains on the Command of his Majesty's Ships, no difficulties can arise on the degree of subordination due from his Majesty's Commanding officer to the Government of India, as his Conduct is the same, as if he were placed under our Orders; but I am decidedly of Opinion, that the Commander of his Majesty's Ships, ought to be formally instructed to consider himself bound, in a certain degree, to attend to the Instructions and Requisitions of the supreme Government.

The Embarrassments from the ill Administration of Affairs in Owde, are increasing, and I am really at a loss without a deviation from our established principle of non Interference, what Measures to pursue. If the necessity of a deviation should be absolute, I shall yield to it, trusting to the rectitude of my principles, and the unequivocal propriety of my Conduct, for my vindication.

I am happy to inform you that I enjoy as perfect a state of health as I ever had in England.

I have the honor to be . . .

Recd 23d Oct 95

<sup>1</sup> Peter Rainier, 1741-1808; Commodore and Commander-in-Chief East Indies; arrived in the East, November, 1793; promoted Rear-Admiral, 1795; Vice-Admiral, 1799; Admiral, 1805. Captured Banda and Amboyna, Feb., March, 1796. See *D.N.B.*

## XIV

## No 3

BENGAL  
March 7, 1795

Dear Sir,

I had the honor to address You last under date the 7th February.

Commodore Mitchell in the course of his expedition seized two Vessels belonging to a subject of America, Adam Babcock. I had reason from the first to apprehend that the Capture was illegal, and if the Dutch had not been concerned, should probably have taken upon myself the responsibility of deciding upon Mitchell's Conduct. The supreme Court of Judicature has done it; one of the Vessels has been restored with, & one without Damages. If Babcock's Suit had been well managed he might I understand have recovered from the Company; but as the Circumstances of his Case were particularly hard, I thought myself justified under the Sanction of an Opinion from the Advocate General, in advancing him a Sum by way of compensation, without admitting his Claim of right to be reimbursed by the Company. Political Considerations, as well as those of Humanity weighed with me, in this Resolution, which I hope will be approved.

Mr Joy, the American Consul although not acknowledged by Us, as such, returns to his native Country, by the Vessel which will sail in a few Days. I found also on my Accession to the Government, a Gentleman calling himself Tuscan Consul. They have both conducted themselves with great Propriety, Mr Joy in particular is a sensible moderate, well informed Man. The only danger arising from the residence of privileged Consuls at this Presidency, is this, that they may cover the illegal Trade of British Subjects, to a very great extent, & if Consuls are to be admitted here, they should be placed under such

Restrictions, as may prevent this Effect.<sup>1</sup> I do not find that You have acknowledged my Letter to You upon this subject.

I recommend to your Notice the Calcutta Gazette of March 5. last. It gives a comparative Account of the Company's Credit, & the Result is as follows.

The Madras Debt on the 31st of January last	
amounted to Current Rupees.....	12 lacs
The Bombay debt on the same date to Current	
Rupees .....	58 do
	—
Total Lacs .....	70

Of which the Interest on 14 lacs had ceased and the remainder was at 6 P Cent only.

The Madras & Bombay Debts on the 31st of January 1792 amounted to 220 Lacs of Current Rupees and bear a various Interest of 12, 10, 9½ & 8 P Cent—

I have compleated and recorded the Discussion mentioned in my last Address and beg here to recommend it to your Consideration as containing Sentiments & principles for future Conduct, which ought to be admitted or disapproved. I furnish Lord Hobart with all my political Minutes. I hope you will not be alarmed by some late unfounded Surmizes, & Intelligence from the Coast.

My attempt to open a commercial Intercourse with Napoléon is not encouraged by the Rajah, but I still hope that the experiment will not be fruitless.

I have had the Honor to receive your Letter recommending Mr Dashwood whom I shall be happy on every Account to serve, but there are few stations which will suit

<sup>1</sup> This practice of trading illegally under foreign flags was the chief thorn in the side of the East India Company. It was not confined to outsiders, but was indulged in by Company servants and even occasionally by members of the Court of Directors. See the writer's *Henry Dundas*, p. 181.

him. I have this day offerd him an Appointment, & shall be glad to give him any, that does not require a knowledge of the Country Languages as an indispensable Qualification.

I have the honor to be . . .

R/ 23rd Octr. 1795

## XV

No. 4 Private

May 12th 1795<sup>1</sup>

Dear Sir,

My last address was dated 7th March.

The war between the Mahrattas and the Nizam, is now terminated to the irretrievable disgrace of the latter. His Army in Numbers and Discipline was equal to that of the Peshwah, and if he had consigned the Disposition of it to Monsieur Raymond, I doubt not that he would have proved victorious, and moderation might have insured an honourable accomodation. The Action, was a mere Skirmish, and although the Troops on both sides amounted to 150 Thousand men, not two hundred perish'd. In a protracted War, the Mahrattas must have succeeded. I have already anticipated in a Minute of the 18th February, many Reflections suggested by this unfortunate event which has not only added to the positive Strength of the Mahrattas, by an accession of Wealth, Territory, and Reputation, but has I fear placed the Nizam absolutely under their Controul. To foresee and calculate the possible consequences of the present Situation of affairs, my attention is constantly directed. The Nizam has dismissed our Battalions; they were employed in disgraceful and delicate Service, and I should have seen their removal with satisfaction, if I were not obliged to attribute it, to the Influence of the Mahrattas. Sir Rob: Abercromby has communicated

<sup>1</sup> Part of this letter has been printed in Shore Correspondence, I, 330.

to me his Sentiments on the Reference made to him at my Proposition, on the Competency of our Army for the defence of the Country. In two Propositions I entirely concur with him, the Substitution of a Provincial Corps, for the Brigade Troops, for the details of Revenue and Judicial Services, and the acquisition if possible of the Fort of Allahabad, from the Vizier; but I have not yet been able to discuss with him, the whole subject, which is of the first importance.

The Disorders in Owde are so serious, that I fear the necessity of repairing there myself to restore them if possible. The Dominions of Asoph-ud-doulah, are in the precise situation to tempt an Invasion; disaffection and anarchy prevail throughout, and nothing but the presence of our two Brigades prevents Insurrection; the Nabob is in a state of Bankruptcy, without a sense of his Danger, and without a wish to guard against it. The Indolence, and Dissipation of his Character, are too confirmed to allow the Indulgence of any expectation of Reformation on his part, and this Consideration with which a regard for my own reputation is connected, makes me hesitate, as I certainly could not find time to do more than arrange a plan of Reform, the Execution of which must be left to others. But my Determination will ultimately be guided by a sense of Duty in this respect as in all others, with no regard for personal Consequence farther than as they are important to the prosperity of the Company's affairs. I shall therefore wait the arrival of Intelligence from Europe, before I come to a decision, and if no Circumstances should occur to render my residence at the Presidency indispensable, and if I see any Prospect of restoring the Nabob's administration to order, and Repute; I shall undertake it in the full conviction of its importance to the Security of the Company's Dominions in India. With a view to this object, which I have not mention'd to any Person, I am endeavouring to prepare

the previous Arrangements for its Accomplishment and Success.

I have been under the necessity of addressing Nasir ul Mulk the Nabob of Bengal, in terms of some severity & remonstrance. His Character is marked by abandon'd dissipation and he wants both the Good Sense & pliability of Disposition which his father possessed. Mobarck in his early youth disgraced himself in the same manner, and involv'd himself in Debts by his Extravagance, which still form a burthen on the Nizamut Stipends. The Conduct of his son will I fear compell me, to adopt the same measures with regard to him, as were employed by the existing Government with respect to his Predecessor and he will of course complain of the disgrace put upon him; but he has already degraded himself by his behaviour. The Death of his Father was imputed to Poison administer'd by the Son; without the least foundation; but the existence of such a Report, which at Moorshedabad obtained Currency, is a proof of the General opinion entertain'd of the Nabob. Such a Calumny could never have been surmis'd if the Character of Nasir ul Mulk had not been suspicious.

In a letter to Mr. Grant by this dispatch, I have communicated to him, many details, which are not of sufficient Importance to trouble you with; I shall therefore only give you the result.

We have Twenty Lacs of Rupees in our Treasury which I hope to keep there undiminished; my Commercial Agent is set out for Napaul under an Invitation from the Rajah, and Captain Symes has been received at Rangoon the Sea Port to the Kingdoms of Ava & Pegu, with every mark of Attention and Respect. The Credit of the Company is high, and the Batta on the Exchange of Gold as well as the Discount on Paper, are less than they were at this Period last year. The Judicial Departments of Government are attended to with a regularity that has left nothing undecided on and I have ordered the proceedings to be prepar'd for transmission to Europe. The Revenues

are in general well realised, and the Country improves under the existing Regulations, which in several Respects, and with the strictest adherence to the fundamental Principle of them have been amended. I can indeed with Truth inform you that prosperity reigns in this Part of India, & if it should please Providence to grant me health, & to withhold its more awful Dispensations, I will promise that the prosperity of the Country shall not be diminished under my administration. My health is latterly improved to a degree beyond all expectation, and I have sanguine hopes of its continuance. The Season has been uncommonly hot, and rather alarming as to the Consequences of it, but we are provided against the calamity of a Scarcity which I have no right at present to presume.

I have the honor to be . . .

## XVI

### No. 5

May 18th 1795

The Right Honble Henry Dundas

Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure to send you two accounts, the one containing a Comparative Statement of the Progress of the Discount upon Company's Paper, during the official Years 93/4 and 94/5, and the latter a Statement of the receipts during the last Year of Account, comprising the result of various Accounts. From the former you will perceive during the Period of Comparison commencing with September a difference in favour of the latest Period, and the latter on a Comparison with the Estimate of the year, will prove that in every article we have realised more than the Estimate. I am sorry not to have it in my power to send you the last account officially, but I may venture to assure you, that the Inaccuracies cannot be material, it is drawn out by our Accountant General Caldecott, and



may for all useful purposes be relied upon as authentic.<sup>1</sup> I have this Day only received from the Resident at Luknow, some important Documents, relating to the Designs of Golam Mahomed, and which will most fully substantiate my opinion, of their dangerous tendency, and of the absolute necessity of crushing the Rebellion in its infancy.<sup>2</sup> I have a Brother with me in India, Lieut. George Cornish, and hoped by Sir R. Abercromby's Interest to procure him a Company, but the claims of many older officers will I fear prevent it, and I therefore follow Sir R's advice in taking the liberty to solicit your Interest in his favour for Promotion to a Company in Europe.<sup>3</sup> I have agreeably to an Intimation which I mentioned in my last No. 4 taken the preparatory Measures for a Journey to Luknow under the Conditions which I then mentioned. The task of reformation will be arduous, but I shall not be terrified or alarmed at difficulties. In this measure if I should ultimately resolve to adopt it, I shall sacrifice Inclination to Duty.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd overland  
12th Decr. 1795

## XVII

Private. No. 6

The Right Honble  
Henry Dundas,  
Dear Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your

<sup>1</sup> This statement shows that the discount of the Company's 6% Paper rose from 11 annas to 4 rupees in 1793/4; and fell to 3 rupees 4 annas in 1794/5; the premium on the 8% paper fell from 1r 6a to 7a in 1793/4, and from 1r 3a to 10a in 1794/5. The Bengal revenue collections for 1794/5 were 2,82,98,000 R's.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mill, *History of British India*, VI, 46.

<sup>3</sup> Sir John Shore had married Miss Charlotte Cornish, daughter of James Cornish, Collector of Customs at Teignmouth, Devon. See Shore Corr. I, 117.

two Letters of the 20th December and 24th February, the former marked No. 6 and the latter conveying a Copy of Lord Cornwallis's Plan of Arrangement for the Indian Army.

Neither your Object nor that of his Lordship has been answered by the Publication of the Plan in Bengal, as with few objections it seems to have been very generally condemned. Some of the Parts most objected to are these: The transfer of the Army from the Service of the Company to that of his Majesty, the Disproportion of Officers between the Native and European Regiments, the Permission granted to the Colonels to reside in England, in the enjoyment of their Full Allowances, the Sale of Commissions, the abolition of Double Full Batta from all and of the Revenue Money from the Field Officers, combined with the advantages, by an Increase of Pay, to the Armies at Madras and Bombay, where Promotion is so much more rapid than in Bengal, I merely state what I have heard upon the Subject from those who have opportunities of knowing the Sentiments of the Officers, and which it is my Duty to learn.

With respect to myself, I have cautiously avoided giving the most Distant intimation of my opinion on the Plan of Lord Cornwallis, or on the Arrangement in general, and I dwell the less upon the objections as you will learn them in Detail from others.

The delay in transmitting your final Resolutions upon this subject has been attended with much Inconvenience, as it has augmented the general Anxiety, and has contributed to encourage Discussions and extend Combination. No Plan can be adopted that will probably meet present Expectation, but as far as I can judge of the general temper of the Army, there is no disposition to violent Measures, although I should not be surprised if the Regulations were to produce Representation, in temperate but firm language. Propositions have certainly been made, to anticipate the *supposed* Arrangement, by Representation, but the good

sense of the Majority has prevailed over the Violence of the few, and nothing has more contributed to pacify the Military in general, than the attention of his Majesty to them, in suspending the Promotions of his own Officers, untill the Arrangement shall be completed.

There is one point upon which I must solicit your Indulgence, and if necessary your support. We have upon full consideration deemed it prudent not to require the Subscription of the Military to the Covenants sent out by the Court of Directors. They contain a Clause subjecting the Subscribers to Dismission from the Service by the authority of the Government without the Sentence of a Court Martial. This obligation is not only unnecessary for the object of Controul, but is diametrically opposite to the Practice of this Government for the last twenty years founded on the orders of the Court of Directors.

The Government exercises the Power of Suspension until the pleasure of the Court can be known, and this is sufficient; to assume or require more in the present temper of the officers might tend to irritate and produce Remonstrance, and as it is of the utmost consequence to establish the Arrangement when it arrives, it would be highly imprudent to aggravate Indisposition, by a Requisition which would certainly produce that Effect. I trust you will concur with me in the Propriety of these Reflections and Determination, which I have not thought prudent to submit to the Court. The Government Collectively, and myself Individually have lately entered into some Discussion with Lord Hobart, relating to the following Subjects.

1. The Promotion of Major Young and his appointment to a Seat at the Military Board.
2. His Treaty with the King of Candia, and his Construction of the orders from Europe.
3. The Detachment of a Battalion, for the assistance of the Nizam in Kurpah.
4. And the Permission proposed to be granted to Major

Macdonald<sup>1</sup> to reside with the Nizam, for the purpose of counteracting the influence of the French officers in his Highness's Service.

On these Points I shall not recapitulate what appears upon Record. Lord Hobart considers the Appointment and Promotion of Major Young a matter of internal Detail, if so, the reference to our Authority was unnecessary. When his Lordship gave us official notice of the Measure it was incumbent upon us to approve or disapprove it, and the Disapprobation was expressed in Terms which ought to have caused the immediate Revocation of the Appointment and Promotion. That we did not give positive orders to this Effect solely proceeded from Delicacy to his Lordship.

The Bombay Presidency without any authority from us, or even Notification of their Resolution had struck off the Staff from the strength of the Corps on the Precedent of this Government, but the case was widely different; the object of the Measure here adopted long ago, was to accelerate Promotion, which at Bombay was comparatively rapid. We deemed it our Duty to rescind the Resolution of the Bombay Government, and I could not upon any Principle of Consistency authorize the Appointment of Major Young, which had not in my opinion any solid ground in support of it. I communicated these Sentiments to Lord Hobart, whom I should have been happy to gratify personally, if it could have been done without obvious partiality, and Inconsistency.

On the Second and Third Points you have my Sentiments publicly; with respect to the Treaty with the King of Candia, it was impossible to overlook the obvious Violation of the Act of Parliament, which was not even noticed in the Public Dispatches from his Lordship. Our Sentiments were expressed to him however, with as much Delicacy as the case admitted, and it will readily occur to you that the

<sup>1</sup> Major Forbes Ross MacDonald. He travelled widely in the East on various missions for the Indian Government.

Measure was obvious to many more observations than appear upon Record.

Whether the intimation of his Lordship to Mr. Van Angelbeck the Governor of Columbo, that in the event of refusing obedience to the requisition made to him, force would be employed to compel it, or our Directions that every conciliatory Proposition should precede the Employment of force or an intimation that recourse would be had to it, be the correct Interpretation of your orders, you are best qualified to judge. The intimation of his Lordship appeared to me calculated to irritate, and perhaps excite an Indisposition which did not exist.

The power of the French under Raymond with the Nizam is considerable and by cooperation with their countrymen from Europe might be seriously formidable to us, if the active Exertions of that Nation should be directed towards any part of India. The only mode of annihilating this power, was to allow the Nizam to entertain officers of our own Nation and the opinion which I had formed of the Talents of Major Macdonald pointed him out to me as a fit Person for controuling a business of so much Importance and Delicacy. With this view I proposed that Major Macdonald should be allowed to enter into the Nizam's Service and to engage with my Knowledge & Concurrence a sufficient Number of British Subjects as officers under him; if it were possible to prevent Europeans entering into the Service of the Native Powers, the Resolution on every Principle ought to be enforced, but when the question lies between the French or English only, the decision upon it is plain. As my Proposition however was confined to Major Macdonald, it is unnecessary to enter into the general Question. The Deputation of that Gentleman to Batavia has in fact superseded the Execution of the Plan. I need scarcely add, that this Government was to take no concern in it, and that no officers in the Company's Service were to be permitted to enter into that of the Nizam.

You will do me the Justice to believe that I do not seek

opportunities for exerting the Controul of this Government over the Subordinate Presidencies ; and that I am inclined by Disposition to use all possible Conciliation in the conduct of Public Business. If it were otherwise I have no time for Controversy, although I am ready to enter into the Discussion of any measure where it can lead to useful Information. Lord Hobart can always obtain my previous Sentiments by a private Reference, and if the Measure should not admit of Delay, he will be certain of indulgent consideration.

Lord Hobart as far as I can judge of his Administration, appears to be active, zealous and decisive, and to possess Talents equal either to his present Station, or to that which I have the honor to hold. But I apprehend also that he is sometimes arbitrary and precipitate ; Qualities ill calculated for the administration of Business in this Country, and which farther Experience will correct. I give you my Sentiments with a freedom proportionate to the encouragement, which you hold out to me.

Nothing has yet disturb'd the harmony subsisting between my Colleagues and myself nor is likely to do so ; and I should regret the loss of Sir Robert Abercromby, if in conformity to the wishes which he last Year expressed, he should leave India before my Departure.<sup>1</sup> If his Abilities were equal to his Zeal, his Honour and Integrity, he would be the most perfect Character I have ever known. But his Abilities do not command the respect of the Army, and the Governor General and Commander in Chief ought to have more Talents than either of us possesses. We shall however both furnish Proofs of what may be performed by honesty under the guidance of common Sense.

You will find from the official Dispatches that our internal Situation is prosperous, and that externally nothing threatens to disturb the Tranquillity of India. Yet if the French were to appear in force here, and success should attend their Exertions, no Dependance could be placed on

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Abercromby went home in Jan., 1797, because of severe eye-trouble.

the Alliance or Friendship of the Marattas, Tippoo, or the Nizam.

I beg your particular attention to two Minutes of mine recorded in the Secret Department in February and June, and one from the Commander in Chief in May, not only as relating to Subjects of the greatest Importance, but as containing the Grounds of very important Resolutions.

I have the Honor to be . . .

Bengal,

26. August 1795

## XVIII

No. 7.

BENGAL

November 5, 1795

*Private*

Dear Sir,

I had the honor to address you last, under date the 26th August.

By the public Dispatches you will receive ample Details on the Affairs of this Government, and I shall confine this Address principally to Subjects, which do not appear in them, or to later Information than our official Letters convey.

Enclosed you will receive Copies of a private Letter to me, from Captain Symes, dated from Amerapoor the Capital of Ava, on the 13th September, and of Articles of a Commercial Treaty, under negotiation between him, and the Ministers of that Kingdom. I have not deemed myself authorized to communicate these Papers officially, lest my expectations, & those of the public, should be disappointed but I cannot but feel much satisfaction at the progress of an Intercourse, which opens a prospect of political & Commercial Advantages to the Company. I am ashamed to say how little we know of the Kingdom of Ava, before the present Deputation, and if Captain Symes should be able to

obtain the King's Consent to his proposed Articles, he will be entitled to much Commendation. The nomination of a permanent Agent or Consul, will be expedient; not only for promoting the newly established Intercourse and harmony, but as a Check upon the licentiousness of the Europeans, who frequent the Port of Rangoon, or who may trade to the Capital; the intemperance of those already established there, has contributed in a very material Degree, to the Disgrace of the European Character, and to those Restraints & Suspicions, which the Ava Government has heretofore maintained.<sup>1</sup>

The presents sent by Capt. Symes were ill adapted, to a splendid and well regulated Court, they were rather selected with a view to Commerce. You will recollect that about eighteen Months ago, we were in a situation of doubtful Hostility with respect to the Burmese (or Subjects of Ava) and I am happy to reflect that our Moderation and firmness on that occasion have had a material Influence on the Dispositions of the Court of Ava.

On the subject of our Negotiations with the Rajah of Travancore, I have only to refer you to my Minute, which contains all the details in my Power to suggest, and I hope the Measure will be entitled to your Approbation. We are bound to defend the Rajah, & the Object is to strengthen his Attachment, and procure a subsidy from him.

I think proper also to trouble You, with Copies of Garrison & General Orders respectively issued by the Commander in Chief & myself, and to explain the occasion of them. An Advertisement appeared in the Gazette inviting the Officers to meet, subscribed *E. Hopkins by Order of the Presidency Committee of Officers*. That a Committee had long existed at the Presidency was a matter of notoriety,

<sup>1</sup> This treaty did not live up to expectations because the Burmese sovereigns of this period felt themselves above such trifles as treaties. The Burmese king was *legibus solutus* and considered the governor-general of India as a mere underling. He would treat only with King George III himself. See *Cambridge History of India*, V, 559.



and in fact their Moderation was a check upon the Intemperance of the Army at the upper stations, but there is a material difference between an assumed authority & one existing by sufferance only. I was not sorry for the opportunity afforded me to explain the Sentiments of Government to the Army, and Captain Hopkins in his own name & that of the Officers apologized most amply for his Indiscretion, and they were even willing if I had encouraged it to have signed an Address declaratory of these Sentiments.

In Calcutta the Orders have been well received, but not so at the upper Stations; there, the language is intemperate, expressive of strong Indignation; no language shall however move me to depart from my duty.

You will learn publicly the unfortunate termination of the Attempt to prevail on the 15th Battalion to proceed to Malacca, & I have nothing to add to what is stated on the Records.

Captain Green who commanded a Battalion of Seapoys has been permitted to resign the Service, in Terms which are not calculated to produce his Restoration. It appeared incidentally in the proceedings of a Court Martial, that Green had withheld the Batta of the Seapoys, and he was compelled by his Commanding Officer to make restitution to the amount as I privately learn of 30000 R's.

The Commander in Chief very properly, and with my full Concurrence determined to have Green tried by a Court Martial, but as he was in a most deplorable state of Health, and as he had produced Acquittances from his Battalion, for their demands in full upon him, we consented to permit him to resign.

On both these subjects I beg leave to refer you to the Reflections which I had the honor to lay before you last year, as the merits verify the Opinions and Apprehensions which I then suggested. It was certainly our duty to have brought Green to a Court Martial, but many considerations opposed it, and above all, the presumption, that it would have involved transactions for many Years back; it might

have destroyed the Authority of the Officers over the Seapoys, and have exerted very dangerous Commotions among the latter. The example has had all the effect, which severity would have produced without the alarming Consequences attending it; the Batta is no longer withheld and many have been compelled to refund, to avoid public exposure. The expectation of the Arrival of the promised Regulations from Europe, was another Inducement to avoid severity, as it is concluded, that they will place the Commanding Officers of the native Corps, on a more respectable footing as to Emolument, and remove the present irresistible temptation to speculation.

In the letter from the Court of Directors to the Madras Government, a Question I find has been referred to the Decision of Lord Cornwallis, respecting an Arrangement of the Staff at Madras, which we disapproved. The Decision is uninteresting to me, but the Letter of the Court involves an important principle; it asserts or intimates that the Arrangement was a Matter of internal Detail, within the Competency of the Madras Government. If so, I fear that we have frequently erred, as we have often interposed in Matters of detailed Arrangement both at Madras & Bombay, and I always deemed it my duty to interfere, whenever the Occasion appeared to me to call for the controuling Power of the Supreme Administration, with or without reference to us. It is a duty indeed, which I should, personally speaking, willingly resign, and which I always exercise with Reluctance, but as the Act stands, I do not conceive the Option to rest with me. When Matters are referred to us, I do not deem myself authorized merely to give an *Opinion* upon them, subject to the Adoption or Rejection of the Subordinate Government, but *Directions* for their Observance; otherwise it appears to me that the Controul would be inverted. If I am wrong, You or the Court will set me right; if they should follow up their principle they must necessarily disapprove our Resolutions on Major Young's Appointment & irregular Promotion at Fort St. George, & in

the Bombay Staff Arrangement. The latter was effected upon the precedent of this Government, which did not apply to the Case but it immediately formed a precedent of Imitation to the Officers in the Madras Establishment, and produced Representations from them, claiming the Indulgence which had been admitted at Bombay. My Time is more than sufficiently occupied with the Details of my own Administration to induce me to wish for any extension of Interference; but the Currency of the public business, is not impeded here, & for occasional Omissions I must trust to your Indulgence & that of the Court.

The Detention of the Mary Pacquet, has frustrated the Object which induced us to dispatch her, the timely Arrival of the official Accounts. I trust to the Surprise which will convey this to you.

Commodore Ranier has sailed with his Squadron to the Eastward, in order to get Possession of Amboyna & the Dutch Settlements there. He ought to have remained on the Coast, untill the Acquisition of all Ceylon & Cochin, and more certainly as to the Arrival of Admiral Elphinstone. Our Representations on this subject, arrived at Madras too late to prevent his Departure.

I have the honor to be . . .

## XIX

No. 8.

BENGAL  
Nov. 21, 1795

*Private.*

Dear Sir,

I avail myself of the Detention of the Surprise, to add a few lines to my former address to you by this Conveyance.

In the Public Dispatches you will find a full Discussion of a Matter of great eventual importance, the Treaty with the King of Candia. I would have said much more upon the Subject, with reference to the peculiar orders under

which we have acted in taking Possession of the Dutch Settlements, but I deemed it more prudent to leave such Reflections to you. But there is an Observation which I cannot but point out to you, that Lord Hobart on this as well as other Occasions, affects to consider a difference in Sentiments between this Government and himself, as a want of confidence on our part. To such Remarks I have no inclination to make any Public Reply, but if my Reflections on the Measure be well founded, you will I trust agree with me that there never was an Instance, in which this exercise of the controuling Power of the Government, was more opportune or expedient. The Resolution of the Madras Government for entering into a Treaty with the King of Candia, was in my opinion, all circumstances considered, not only ill timed, and dangerous, but illegal ab initio, and the execution of it in direct opposition throughout, to the Statute.

The Death of the Peshwah of which you are publicly advised, is not likely to produce any ill effects on the Company's Interests. The Succession is unsettled and may be disputed, but I do not apprehend that it will be seriously contested. A violent Disunion of the Mahratta Interests might prove a Temptation to Tippoo's Ambition or Animosity.

I hope the Decisive Measures which we have adopted for executing the Instructions of the Secret Committee, in sending Supplies of Grain to Europe will be approved, and I trust you will find some of our Supplies arrive before the end of April.

I have the honor to be . . .

## XX

No. 8.

BENGAL

12th January 1796

*Private*

Dear Sir,

Since the date of my last address, a Duplicate of which is enclosed, I have had the honor to receive your Letters of the 29th April, and 18th June, the former recommending Mr. George Johnstone,<sup>1</sup> at the Instance of Sir William Pulteney, and the latter expressing your approbation of my conduct in the most flattering Terms.

I acknowledge to you without hesitation that Mr. Johnstone would not be the person I should prefer for the office of Resident at Luknow; not that he wants Abilities for it, for his Claims in this respect are superior to most Candidates, but I have good reason for saying that he would be personally disagreeable to the Vizier, not to mention his Pecuniary Demands upon his Excellency to the Amount of Eight Lacs of Rupees. The Resident ought to be independent of any monied Transactions, and confine himself to the Line of his Public Duty only, without which it would be impossible for him to act with Dignity or Consistency: the Determination upon his Pretensions will not probably take place during my Government, and if in any other respect, I can promote his views I shall be happy to attend to your Recommendation.

The Reestablishment of my health in which you have so obligingly expressed the Interest you feel, has so much exceeded Expectation, that I have no Intention of leaving

<sup>1</sup> Probably a relative of "Governor" George Johnstone, d. 1787; called "governor" because he had been Governor of West Florida; had a stormy career in the East India Company. Sir William Johnstone-Pulteney was his brother and took the name of Pulteney from his wife, Frances, 4th daughter of Daniel Pulteney, and heiress to the great Pulteney fortune.

India at present nor as long as you may wish me to continue here, at the same time I am without anxiety to remain here, and should cheerfully acquiesce in any Intimation from you for my return. Whilst I continue to hold my present Station, my exertions to do Justice to your Nomination of me shall be unremitted. I have no object or Ambition or Accumulation to gratify, nor any other desire than to be useful to the Public.<sup>1</sup>

The Controversies between this & the Madras Government, will be as little satisfactory to you, as they are unpleasant to me; I have neither time nor Disposition for them, and as they must come officially before you, I shall not trouble you with any remarks upon them, than to disclaim the Imputation which Lord Hobart has so liberally imputed to myself and my Colleagues, and to assure you that no Intemperance on his Part, will either diminish my Reliance upon his Zeal, or provoke me to transgress the limits of Decorum in my Public Correspondence with him.

The Nabob of Arcot has made an Appeal to this Government in Terms which will compel our Notice, and this will furnish a new Subject of Disagreement: I regret it is unavoidable.

The Conduct of his Lordship towards the Nabob is in my opinion most unjustifiably violent, and indefensible upon any Principle. The Character of the Nabob as represented to me, by those who have observed it, is a compound of Good nature, Vanity, Weakness, and Obstinacy; he is accessible by Flattery, and although he wants exertion, is not deficient in Abilities when compelled to the use of them nor in discernment; the Conduct which I should have recommended to Lord Hobart, if he had asked my private opinion, and which was suggested in our Public Instructions, was Persuasion and Conciliation: Attention from a Man of his Lordship's Rank and Situation, would have flattered his Vanity, a liberal acknowledgement of Rights established

<sup>1</sup> The following six paragraphs are printed in Shore Corr., I, 358 ff.

by Treaty, would have disarmed Suspicion, and address might have conciliated, or seduced his Acquiescence beyond the Power of Retraction. His Lordship might have reflected that the weakest and most timid, will resist compulsion, and that the Language of Intimidation should never be used without the power to enforce it. The event has been precisely what was to be expected, and his Lordship has incurred the obloquy of a breach of Public Faith, without the Satisfaction of succeeding in his object. There is one Principle adopted by his Lordship, which has my decided Disapprobation; that the Nabob is to be forced into Acquiescence, by indirect Means of Coercion: such a Principle, if it were to become a Motive of Action, would soon suggest to the Country Powers, that Convenience was the Measure of our Good Faith.

You will ask me why I do not communicate these Sentiments privately to his Lordship, and my answer is, that I am precluded by the Intemperance of his Language.

I know the wishes of the Company on this business, and I feel all the Importance of establishing their authority effectively over the Carnatic; but the Inflexibility of the Nabob is now so aggravated, that I have no hopes of success with him, and I freely confess to you my Embarrassment in deciding between him & his Lordship.<sup>1</sup>

By private Communications from Mr. Duncan, I fear Corruption has extended to the Malabar Coast, but I shall not enter into Particulars on a Subject, which ought to be mentioned publickly, or not at all; I shall encourage Duncan to prosecute his Suspicions to full Elucidation, in which case you will have them before you. With respect to Bengal I do most conscientiously declare my belief, that the Administration of Public Affairs is carried on through all Departments, with a purity beyond what you will conceive,

<sup>1</sup> For an analysis of the vexed question of the "Nabob of Arcot's Debts," possibly the greatest scandal in Anglo-Indian history in this period, see P. E. Roberts, *India under Wellesley*, ch. ix.

and I can scarcely point out an Individual whom I suspect of Peculation.

By a private Letter from Mr. Cherry<sup>1</sup> I learn that the amount of the Vizier's Debts is nearly compleatly obtained, that the Reformation of his Military Establishments and the Repairs of Allahabad are in Agitation, and that the Progress of Reform though slow, is advancing. I hope to have the Credit and Satisfaction of introducing by conciliatory Methods, and I can employ no others, an Arrangement into the Vizier's Affairs. The object I can assure you occupies me much more than appears Publickly.

The Deficiency in the Revenue arising from the opium this Year, will be more even than the Sum allowed for it: Hostilities with the Dutch, the Diversion of the Shipping, and the bad Quality of the opium are the assigned Causes. Lord Cornwallis was fully apprized of the effects of the opium Contract, and should have anticipated them; our Remarks were too late to guard against the present Consequences, but not I hope to remedy them in future.

The Discount upon the 6 p Cent Notes was for a short time nearly 7 p Cent: I cannot find adequate Causes for it, the most probable were the great Demand for money at the time, the Stoppage of the usual Concerns at Lucknow, and distant apprehensions of ill success or the arrival of a French Fleet. Credit is now compleatly restored.

The termination of the Embassy to Ava, will not I trust prove disreputable to the Government or the Negotiator. The actual Expence may be one Lac of Rupees, and a further Charge will be incurred of probably Thirty Thousand more. I think we have gained an Equivalent.

Of the State of the Army I could say much, but shall say little. The enclosed Paper<sup>2</sup> was received by me, on the 18th of December, before the Declaration of Government was published at the Upper Stations, and will give you a tol-

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the Resident at Benares who was later murdered by Wazir Ali, the deposed Nawab of Oudh.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in Appendix, *infra*, pp. 149-151.



erable Idea of the temper of the officers lately there. I could communicate to you facts, in proof of some of the Assertions, and I sincerely hope that the Regulations will soon arrive, and that we may not be compelled either to compliance or Coercion. I shall hereafter communicate to you Circumstances the Notification of which at present might alarm but would answer no good purpose. We are not inattentive to the importance of our Situation, every day's Delay in the arrival of the Regulations heightens Expectation, and increases Discontent. I am not alarmed, but anxious.

The Death of the Peshwah was a Circumstance highly favourable to us, but Sir Charles Malet,<sup>1</sup> with more Zeal than Judgement interfered in the Measures for the appointment of a Successor, in a very objectionable Mode. It was only necessary to leave the business to its natural Course and Consequences; but he committed himself with the Ministers of Sindiah who opposed the Succession proposed by the Minister, at the risque of offending the latter and what was naturally to be expected, finds himself the Dupe of those with whom he negotiated. I could not but condemn his Imprudence, and I should have used strong terms of Reprehension, if the Zeal Prudence and Success of his general Conduct had not pleaded for all possible Indulgence. Every day's Experience confirms my Conviction, that we cannot deviate from the strait line of Policy without danger.

I have the honor to be . . .

## XXI

BENGAL

5th Feb. 1796

*Private*

Dear Sir,

I shall confine this letter principally to the Proceedings

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Malet, 1753-1815, for several years British Resident at Poona.

of the Army in Bengal which have of late engrossed my attention. The Subject will be detailed in our Secret Proceedings, and the Perusal of them will surprise and alarm you.

Before the departure of Lord Cornwallis, the officers had frequent Meetings, and had even then entered into Engagements of mutual support, of all which he was apprized, and issued a General order prohibiting these Meetings. Their Proceedings were afterwards carried on under an obligation of Secrecy, and it was not untill the 25th December that I had it in my power to obtain detailed Information of them, and even at this moment I have reason to believe many Projects have been agitated of a very violent not to say treasonable nature, of which we have an imperfect knowledge.

I confess for my own part that I had little apprehension as to any serious Consequences from these Combinations; I relied upon the Good sense and Principle of the Majority of the officers to suppress any Measures inconsistent with Fidelity and Allegiance, and the Interest of all the Superiors was so evidently concerned in the Rejection of them, that I considered the Projects agitated in private Conversation of which I occasionally heard, as the Effect of Folly and Impatience, which had no support from the Majority of the Army.

In the daily expectation of the arrival of the Regulations from Europe, for the last four Months, it appeared to me of the first importance to keep the Army in good humour with a view to the Establishment of them, and in the same Expectation I should still have persevered in my conduct if the violence of the officers at Khanpore, in the prosecution of Measures, more unanimously adopted at Futtighur, had not compelled the Interference of Government to check the Progress of Measures inconsistent not only with its authority but Existence.

I therefore suggested to Sir Robert Abercromby to proceed to the Upper Stations of the Army and with that Zeal

and honour which actuate him on all occasions, he set out for Khanpore on the 21st Jan. without a Moment's delay, and in the course of three or four days I expect to learn his arrival there.

I still think that his Presence and Authority will restore Order and Subordination without the necessity of Coercive Measures but he has the fullest authority to act, and an assurance of our Determination to meet any Emergency rather than submit to Combinations which would ultimately lead to Anarchy and Confusion: at the same time we thought it necessary to take such Precautions as could be adopted against the worst Consequences, without creating an alarm, which might have been attended with very prejudicial Effects to our Finances, or political Situation.

At Khanpore the friends of order have prevailed against its Enemies, and there the General will find many friends; at Futtighur the officers appear to me to have been more unanimous in the adoption of violent Resolutions, and the object of the late contest at Khanpore, which has ended in the defeat of the violent Party, was to seduce or compell the acquiescence of the moderate.

That the Majority who have concurred in those Proceedings have been imperceptibly led to an Implication in them I doubt not and the Interference of Government has already recalled many to useful reflection: The only danger is this, that some under the consciousness of having gone too far to retract, may be led into measures of Desperation and that the obligations which most have entered into, may deprive Government of the support of others. The Native Troops I am thoroughly satisfied would not take part with their officers against the Government if any should be so abandoned as to attempt an Insurrection.

Amongst other Propositions which have been agitated, are the following.

A Resolution to throw off all Allegiance to Government in March, if the Regulations should not arrive by that time, and the Seizure of the Governor General and Commander

in Chief, and to compell by force of arms all to join them, with many others equally treasonable. I am told that the first Resolution was adopted at Futtighur at a Meeting of Fifty officers, with only two dissenting Voices.

At that Station Colonel Popham commanded, and there the most violent Propositions have constantly originated, without any Communication from him to the Commander in Chief.

At Dinapore I have Information that the officers are awakened as from a Dream, and now wonder at the Absurdity of the Committees, and have burnt their Papers and Proceedings.

From Berhampore, Colonel Morgan gives me satisfactory assurances as to the Disposition of the officers under authority.

From the officers of the Battalions under the Command of Colonel Erskine at Midnapore I have received Professions of Duty and Attachment, and Assurances of their aid & Effort towards the Suppression and defeat of Measures tending to derange or impede the Authority of Government; the same Sentiments are adopted by those under Lieutenant Colonel MacGowan, who is on his March to the Presidency with a Division of the Brigade belonging to this Station. Yet these Gentlemen have avowed the Combination of the whole Army in a Resolution (which it had pledged itself to support) to obtain a Redress of Grievances and the Concession of acknowledged Rights, and they confide in government to make an immediate organization of the Army, forgetting that the principles of such Association are incompatible with Discipline and Allegiance, and that no means can be pursued for giving Effect to them, without transgressing the Limits of Duty. Yet I am taught to believe that they conceived the address would be highly gratifying to Government & remove all Suspicions injurious to their Honor.

I should not hesitate a Moment to gratify the Impatience of the Army for a New organization, if by a fixed Period

the Regulations should not arrive, provided they would solicit it in Terms of Duty and Respect, professing an unreserved acquiescence in the Resolutions of Government, and renouncing all Meetings and Combinations, but untill these are checked, it would be impossible to gratify them, the Declaration of such an Intention would only produce new Combinations and instead of submitting to Government they would insist upon treating with it. The spirit of association must be quelled in the first Instance, at all Risques; it has already acquired such a Habit, that I look with apprehension to future, though perhaps remote consequences.

I still repeat I am more anxious than alarmed; I do not think the officers at Futtighur either determined, prepared, or sufficiently unanimous to dispute with the General the Assumption of the Command of the Army, yet we have adopted provisional Measures both for his personal Security and the support of the Government.

I have some little anxiety also, as to the state of our Finances; our opium Resources have failed, & the Demands upon our Finances have augmented. At the end of April we shall have barely sufficient Cash to liquidate the Demands upon it. The Supplies by Bills on the Court of Directors will not I fear prove sufficient. The Grain and Tonnage have carried away those Resources which would have supplied all current Demands.

I have a Pacquet ready to Dispatch at the shortest Notice if there should be any necessity for this Measure.

I have the honour to be . . .

## XXII

No. 9

February 7th, 1796

Dear Sir,

A delay in the dispatch of the Ships, affords me an opportunity of submitting to you an unofficial memorandum, on the Finances of this Government, of which it is proper

you should have the most accurate Information possible. The Result of the whole, is as follows.

Deficiency in the Estimated assets .....	23,50,000
Excess in Disbursements .....	33,00,000
	<hr/>
Total .....	56,50,000
Deduct probable Excess in Receipts .....	9,00,000
Remains Excess beyond the Estimate .....	45,50,000

The Deficiency in the Receipts of the Land Revenue may rather be deemed a Suspension than Loss, and I hope it will be less than what is stated. The Collection on account of old Balances was overrated in the Estimate. The opium Deficiency I deem too probable, and the Revenue from this Source will annually fail, unless the Provision should be made by Agency instead of Contract. On this we want the orders of the Court of Directors.

I have no News from Sir Robert Abercromby since he left Benares, but I am happy to find the Disposition of the officers, within my own Observation much meliorated, and to learn that at Khanpore their Sentiments are much changed.

Colonel Fullarton<sup>1</sup> the Commanding Officer, writes, that all the Colonels and Commandants of Corps are firm to their Duty.

You will be surprized to hear that the Triton Indiaman has been captured by one of our Pilot Schooners converted into a Privateer. A Letter from Ganjam mentions it. The conduct of the Captain in suffering himself to be surprized is unaccountable, but my Information states that he is killed. Although the presence of Commodore Rainier could not have prevented the accident, it might have deterred the French from appearing in the Bay, and the Dutch from throwing succours into Columbo, as is reported.

The Nizam has conferred a Territorial Jaghire upon

<sup>1</sup> William Fullarton, 1754-1808, passed many years in India; friend of Henry Dundas; probably best known for his work as Commissioner for the Government of Trinidad. See *D.N.B.*

Monsieur Raymond who commands a large Body of men in his Service, of Sixteen Lacks of Rupees per Annum, notwithstanding every effort of our Resident to prevent it. You may recollect a Discussion with Lord Hobart on the subject of my Proposition for stationing Major Macdonald with the Nizam, and the ground of my Argument, "That whilst it is impossible to hinder Europeans from entering into the Service of the Native Princes, it is certainly most advisable that they should be British." The position however applied only to Major Macdonald personally, and if he could have superseded the influence of Raymond, I should have deemed it a most fortunate Circumstance. If Raymond has prudence and Judgement, he may soon be in a situation to controul the Nizam, and the Succession upon his Death.

We have written to General Craig<sup>1</sup> to send if possible one of his Majesty's Regiments to Bengal: in stating our Exigencies to him, we leave it to his Judgement from a consideration of his own, to decide upon our application.

We have not yet taken up the Reference from Madras on the Measures pursued by Lord Hobart, subsequent to his Highness' Death; the Truth is that my time and attention have been constantly engrossed by Objects of superior Importance.

I have the honor to be . . .

XXIII

No. 10

BENGAL  
8th Feb. 1796

Dear Sir,

Since the date of my Letter to you by this dispatch, I have received the following Intelligence from Khanpore,

1 Sir James Craig, 1748-1812, commanded the military force for the capture of the Cape of Good Hope; Governor-General, in Canada, 1807-11. Dundas refused to make him Commander-in-Chief in India on account of his ungovernable temper.

which the General reached on the 30th ultimo. The Communication is from Major Scott, who accompanied him, to one of my aides de camp, but it is not official.

“The General has the Satisfaction to find that the violent and extravagant Proceedings and Resolutions of the intemperate and designing, have been effectually opposed and checked by all the officers of Rank, Respectability and Reflection at this Station. Everything is in perfect order & tranquill here. Goodwill appears in the Countenance of every Individual, but there is a reserve which I fancy will not be easily vanquished, and which to my Comprehension indicates in all an acquaintance with Secrets which they wish they were not in Possession of, and which a sort of Bond of Union, prevents their disclosing. I had a Conversation with A, in which he unequivocally declared his own Attachment, and his confidence in his Corps, but he added with a significance of look which I comprehended, that he hoped the General would be able to settle every thing to his satisfaction without having recourse to harshness in regard to any Individuals.”

I have the honour to be . . .

## XXIV

No. 11

BENGAL

March 6, 1796

Dear Sir,

A slight Indisposition, compells me to limit my present Communication to a short address.

Although the Intemperance of the Officers of the Bengal Army has received a check from the Interposition of Government, the Embers of Discontent still remain, and might easily be kindled into a flame. Their late violence was certainly in great Measure excited by Intelligence from their Agents, recommending Unanimity and perseverance in the prosecution of their Objects, & the last Advices from Eu-



rope, were of a nature to produce the same effects, if the presence of Sr R. Abercromby had not imposed Restraint upon them. Such Agents should not be admitted nor allowed; an imprudent letter from them, may do more mischief, than can be remedied.

I know not how you will approve the Moderation of our Conduct. Severity to Individuals although I am satisfied that it might have been exerted successfully, might have produced a compleat Disorganization of the Army, the Officers of which with few Exceptions are united in Obligations of Secrecy and mutual Support. This Consequence might have led to others still more dangerous, perhaps to Insurrections of the natives. It was our Business therefore to avoid it if possible, and to insure order & Subordination by temperate Measures. Personal Apprehension had no Influence with me, and if the actuality had been unavoidable I would have met it. I rejoice however that We have escaped this dreadfull Alternative, and the Arrival of the expected Regulations will I trust, enable us to put the Army on a proper footing; at present, nothing can be worse.

We have this day Intelligence of the Surrender of Columbo, & all the Dutch Possessions in Ceylon, to his Majesty's Arms. I firmly hope Success in Europe, will enable You to retain these valuable Possessions, if You cannot, the Treaty with the King of Candia will be worse than nugatory. I would have avoided the Alternative, and am satisfied that it might have been avoided, without the least risque of Success in Ceylon.

I have the honor to be . . .

BENGAL  
5th July 1796

*Private*

The Right Honble

Henry Dundas,

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the favor of your Letter of the 24th Octo. and am fully sensible of your obliging attention to me, at a Period of incessant and embarrassing occupation.

I cannot but feel much flattered at the concern you express for the Restoration of my health, particularly as connected with your wishes for my remaining in India. During the last three months I have suffered greatly from Indisposition of the most disqualifying nature, so much so, as to apprehend a deprivation of my Faculties, and without the assistance afforded me by my Colleagues in taking upon themselves, the Labours of the Judicial Department, I must for a time have retired from business. With the Rainy Season my health as usual has been considerably restored, but I doubt if I shall be justified in remaining another Year in India. On this subject I shall defer any positive Determination, untill the Season of the Departure of the Ships, when I shall be better enabled to judge how far the state of my health will allow me to entertain hopes of discharging Public Duties to your Satisfaction and my own.

Nothing has so much embarrassed me since my accession to the Government, as the State of the Military in Bengal, and to my incessant anxiety upon this Subject my Indisposition may in great measure be attributed; the Discontent of the officers has now ceased its Importunity & Remonstrance, but I am not without much solicitude for the Restoration of due order and Subordination, and for your Decision on the Mode in which the Military Regulations have been carried into effect.

The Fermentation upon the Promulgation of the new Arrangement was general and violent, and at one Period I so much apprehended the necessity of an appeal to Force for its Establishment, that I could not but suggest to Sir R. Abercromby, the propriety of making due preparation. I confess to you at the same time, that the Means of Compulsion were not very accessible. He was of opinion that an order for the Brevet Promotion, including the Distribution of Batta, to which the officers promoted, were in consequence entitled, would tend to conciliate, and the Effect corresponded with his Judgement. But the opposition to Regimental Rise still seemed insuperable, and dictated private and Public Representations and Remonstrances from all Quarters. You may in some measure form a Judgement of the Temper of the Army from their Public Addresses to the Government, and the Commander in Chief, and of the extent to which Expectation & Dissatisfaction had arisen. The prevailing hope was that the Regulations would be entirely set aside, and a new Code be formed here, and the propriety of a Resolution to this Effect occupied my serious Consideration, but as I saw that the Army would be the Dictators of the New Arrangement, after long and anxious deliberation it appeared to me most advisable to adopt the Propositions of the Commander in Chief, as upon the whole best adapted to all Circumstances.

I have recorded my Sentiments on the state of the Army, and upon the Mode of carrying the Regulations into effect, in the Secret Department, but there are some details which I have not ventured to state explicitly.

In the late Military Combinations officers of all Descriptions have been implicated and I had frequent occasion to observe the names of Individuals subscribed to Remonstrances, who had previously expressed the strongest Disapprobation at them. The habit of Peculation had proceeded to such lengths, that the Senior officers were entirely under the Controul of the Subalterns and an alarming Degree of Insubordination prevailed amongst the Native Troops. The

observation of an officer of Experience furnished me with the following state of the Native Force as to Numbers in last January. About 8,000 trained Sepoys, 9,000 Raw undisciplined Troops, and 4000 on Paper only, instead of 21,000 Effective men. All Ranks of officers seemed dissatisfied with the Regulations (the Generals only excepted). Those who were promoted to the Rank of Colonels were disappointed at the Pay; the Majors the same; the Captains of the Seapoy Battalions, at the Deprivation of Emoluments which they had long illegally enjoyed, and the Subalterns at the Disappointment of unreasonable Expectations.

To restore as far as possible, the Discipline and Subordination of the Army was indispensable, and for this purpose Three Modes occurred; to form a new Arrangement, to employ Coercion, or to make such modification in the Regulations as would tend to conciliate the officers, and induce their cooperation. We adopted the last, by a Resolution to suspend the Regimental Rise, and by a partial Augmentation of Allowances.

I have sanguine hopes that expectations will not be disappointed, and that we shall now be able to establish checks for preventing the Recurrence of that Peculation which has been the bane of the Bengal Army and due Subordination amongst the officers. An attempt for a Remonstrance was lately made at Dinapore, but was so much discountenanced, that I think it will not be renewed and it is my determination as well as that of the Commander in Chief, to punish any future deviation from Subordination. The Interests of the Army have been divided, and they would have been still more disunited if the Regimental Rise could have been established. I yielded the Suspension of this Point to the Recommendation of the Commander in Chief with great Reluctance, or rather to a Conviction of the Impossibility of carrying it into Execution at this moment. It may possibly be hereafter effected, as I think the officers will find that their Individual Interests are better consulted in it, than they are

aware of: but the prevailing Dissatisfaction could not be removed by any Argument.

I can only assure you that no subject ever more engrossed my attention, and that it was discussed in every point of view. The Circumstances of our Situation were too strong for Controul, and I yielded to necessity. I am fully sensible of the Responsibility which I have incurred by a Deviation from the Arrangement in two very essential Points, and I most certainly would have avoided it, if I had deemed it practicable. If the Progress of Representation, Remonstrance, and habitual Discontent be stopped, and if the Discipline and Effective strength of the Army can be restored, by the Concessions which we have made for conciliating the concurrence of the officers, or at least of a considerable portion of them, I hope you will agree with me, that the objects justified the Sacrifice. I can only state my Conviction that they could not have been attained without it, and that nothing could be more hazardous than Delay or Suspence in establishing some Arrangement.

Whoever the Successor of Sir Robert Abercromby may be, I sincerely hope that he will possess the vigor and Energy required for his Situation. The good state of the Army is so much connected with the personal Character of the Commander in Chief, that your Knowledge of the one will always enable you to form a Judgement of the other. It is impossible for the Government collectively to superintend the controul of the Army, we have no proper connection with it except through the Commander in Chief, and all we can do is to support him.

I sincerely hope that no Representatives from the Army will ever be acknowledged in England, and that it will be made a fixed Rule to receive no Representations from the officers in India except through the Governments under which they serve. The agents of the Bengal Army have done infinite mischief by their Correspondence with their Constituents.

If you revert to the Proceedings of December and Jan-

uary, you will observe, that the preservation of the authority of Government, depended upon the Resistance made by Individuals at Khanpoor, and the Firmness of the artillery at Fort William. If the same unanimity had prevailed at Khanpoor as at Futtehghur, and if the artillery had acquiesced in the general Resolutions of the Army, we should have been placed in a Predicament of submitting to whatever Terms the officers chose to dictate, or of employing the Native Troops against them. That it has been avoided I most sincerely rejoice, and I trust that we shall never again be exposed to such a danger. I have authority for asserting that a Resolution had been subscribed to, by the officers of one of the Brigades, binding themselves to disobey all orders of Government after a fixed Date, and that it was debated whether the two Brigades on Relief should not remain united, untill an arrangement was formed. All such Ideas are now I firmly believe renounced, but I look back upon the hazard of our Situation with much more apprehension than I felt at the time. I never imputed to the officers of the Bengal Army generally any deliberate Plan of Resistance, but their Proceedings were verging fast and insensibly to the most dangerous Extremities, and there are some amongst them capable of any act of Desperation, and the Secrecy of their Proceedings, and the obligation of mutual support, gave such men every advantage over the more moderate.

From one disagreeable Subject I must proceed to another, the Proceedings of the Madras Government relating to the Treaty with the Rajah of Tanjore. They appeared to me so exceptionable in every point of view, that I could not without a Dereliction of my Duty, avoid stating the observations to which they were liable, and as we were all clearly of opinion, that the Rajah had been compelled to sign the Treaty, or in plain words, Dragooned into it, we had no option but to annul it, and direct the Reestablishment of the former Treaty of 1792. I refer to my Minute on this Subject, which will induce you I think to read the

Proceedings of the Madras Government with attention.

Although I am not without Suspicion that the conduct of the Rajah of Tanjore and his officers has been greatly exaggerated to Lord Hobart, I am equally convinced, that the country would have prospered much more under the British Administration, and if the objects of the Treaty had been accomplished without a Violation of Justice and Good Faith, I should have rejoiced at the attainment of them.<sup>1</sup>

But I have always been in the habit of considering means as well as ends and that no advantage can justify a deviation from Rectitude in any measures, whatever the object of them may be. The difference between Lord Hobart and this Government, both in the case of the Nabob and the Rajah of Tanjore is upon Principles. It might be a sufficient Condemnation of those professed by his Lordship to say that they are maintained by the same arguments to which the most iniquitous Governments would appeal in support of the most iniquitous measures. I need scarcely disavow the application of this Reflection to his Lordship's Administration. If after all the Exertions of the Legislature to compell the Governments of India to observe the strictest Justice and Good Faith in their political Transactions if after the honourable Example and undeviating Endeavours of Lord Cornwallis for the same ends, we are still at liberty to compell the Native Princes of India dependant upon our Protection and Support, to subscribe to whatever Engagements we may chuse to dictate, we ought at once to disavow all pretence of regard to the obligations of Treaties. In the Proceedings at Tanjore I see one object avowed, another pursued and a total disregard of the means adopted for the attainment of it, as if success alone were required for the Justification of a Measure however improper. Some future Government might adopt the same conduct with

<sup>1</sup> See *Cambridge History of India*, V, 355, 360-361. Also K. R. Subramanian, *The Maratha Rajas of Tanjore*, pp. 67-71.

very different views, and the arguments adduced in support of the suggestions of Zeal, might be employed to justify the Plans of Corruption. If Mr. Hastings had done what Lord Hobart has, it would have formed an article in his Impeachment. In his Lordship I see great error of Judgement, unjustifiable violence, and precipitation. Of this you will be in a capacity to form your own Opinion; you may be assured I feel the deepest concern in condemning his Lordship's measures independantly of Public Considerations. I must ultimately in some degree leave my reputation in his hands, when I quit this Government & of my Colleagues, two in all probability will become his associates, but no considerations will ever induce them or me, to sacrifice Principles or refuse Justice to any Native Power on his Appeal to the Tribunal of the Supreme Government. With more Reflection and better Judgement, the Vigour, Decision, and Abilities of his Lordship may become eminently useful.

Of the consistency of my own Principles with my Conduct, I cannot quote a stronger Instance than the recall of the Resident at Luknow. By his Indiscretion he contrived to forfeit all the advantages of my Exertions to prevail upon the Nabob Vizier to establish a better administration, at the very moment when the point was attainable, and to rivet the Influence of the most worthless of the Nabob's Favourites over him. The motives were pure, and his Zeal laudable, but as I could not support his Conduct without sacrificing my own Principles, I had no hesitation in forming my own Resolution. If the Reports circulated in Calcutta of the Transactions at Luknow, should reach England, you will hear sufficient to excite your Surprise. I will not repeat what I know to be totally illfounded, and inconsistent with the Character of the Nabob. He has sense enough to know that his very Existence depends upon the English support, and that if we were to desert him, his Dominions would soon become a prey to the Mahrattas, or some other Power. But I will not take an ungenerous or unjust advantage of his Dependance, nor is it necessary. I trust to



the Prudence of Cherry's Successor Mr. Lumsden, for the Prosecution and attainment of the objects to which the abilities of the former were scarcely equal: and I am satisfied that my Conduct is more calculated to confirm the Influence of this Government over the Nabob, than to diminish it, whatever temporary Interruption it may sustain.

I have been told that the Proposition made to you by the agents of the Bengal Army in one of their Conferences, has been maliciously repeated to the Nabob, as if it were intended to deprive him of the management of his country, and I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in mentioning, what you cannot be aware of, that Sentiments declared in Parliament, may be artfully used to pernicious purposes in India.

I have drawn up a Minute containing a concise Recapitulation of the political state of Affairs for your Information, and that of the Court of Directors, and as it comprizes the late occurrences at Poonah and Hydrabad, and the situation of affairs at Seringapatam, I beg leave to refer you to it.

The situation of our Supreme Court is alarming. Sir Robert Chambers is almost exhausted.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hyde is in a state of Fatuity with little prospect of recovering his health and Intellects, and Sir Wm. Dunken, who was active in his attendance at Court, is occasionally laid up with the Gout. Two Judges at least ought to be appointed.

I hope to be able to send you some Financial Statements by this Dispatch; they are preparing, and if I can procure them in time, I shall make them the subject of another address.

I do not recollect whether I before mentioned to you the appointment of Major MacDonald to the Superintendancy of Prince of Wales Island. He seems to me in every respect

<sup>1</sup> Sir Robert Chambers, 1737-1803; went out to India in 1773 with the better-known Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice who so thwarted Hastings's plans. See *D.N.B.*

qualified for the office, and his activity is particularly calculated to remedy the Evils occasioned by the Imbecillity of his Predecessor, Mr. Mannington.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Dart Packet  
9th Decr. 1796

## XXVI

No. 13.

BENGAL  
July 12th 1796

The Right Honble  
Henry Dundas,  
Dear Sir,

I have now the honor to send you the Sketch which I promised in my address of the 5th Instant, and am sorry that the Statement which it exhibits is not more flattering. I also enclose Copy of a hasty Minute which I laid before the Board.

If the Season should prove favourable, of which there is every present appearance, our Supplies may be assisted by a Sale of part of the Grain in Store.

I also hope the Salt will yield more than the Estimate; something may perhaps be added by the Sale of Notes.

You may depend upon every possible attention on my part.

The Army is perfectly quiet, and whatever regret I may feel at the urgent necessity which dictated the Concessions to them, I have at least the Consolation to find that they have produced the expected Effects.

We have received Intelligence of the Dutch Armament, which left the Texel, on the 25th February, and of its possible Junction with the French Squadron. We shall prepare as well as possible, to meet an attack from it if it

should make any attempt upon the British Possessions in India.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Hobart has sent assistance to the Spice Islands, it was perhaps unavoidable, yet notwithstanding our success in that Quarter, considering the Effect of it upon India only, I regret that so large a force was ever sent there. It will be impossible to maintain Settlements so far distant, against an active and enterprizing Enemy.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Dart Packet,  
9th Decr. 1796

## XXVII

No. 14.

BENGAL  
Sept 9th, 1796

The Right Honble Henry Dundas,  
Dear Sir,

I must apologise to you for a short Letter, as I am too much indisposed to write much, and do not think it proper to detain the Packet which has already been too much delayed.

You will receive our annual accounts and Estimates by this Dispatch. The latter correspond in result with the Estimate which I had the honor to send you by the Dart, although it differs in some particulars. Our Accountant General and myself have taken pains to make it as correct as possible.

We shall certainly stand in need of Pecuniary assistance, and I shall propose to borrow Money on the best possible Terms.

Our Political atmosphere is rather cloudy.<sup>2</sup> You will find that the Conduct of the Nizam is wavering and doubt-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the small Dutch fleet which surrendered to Admiral Elphinstone in Saldanha Bay in August, 1796. See *infra*, pp. 112, 192.

<sup>2</sup> Part of this letter is printed in Shore Corr., I., 383.

ful; those amongst his Counsellors who have most influence with him, are exerting it to make him break with the Company and unite with Tippoo. The latter is making Preparations which have a hostile appearance in the probable expectation of Cooperation with an European Enemy, and the Mahrattas are too much occupied with their intestine feuds to afford us any effectual assistance in the event of a war. If Tippoo should obtain the Cooperation of a French Force, I think it certain that he will attack the Company.

If Azeen ul omrah should soon return to Hyderabad, as appearances indicate, I think it more probable that he will support his Highness' Connection with us, than with Tippoo.

If the latter can obtain the Cooperation of the Nizam, without the assistance of an European Enemy, there is much reason to apprehend an attack from him, nor am I confident that he will not attempt it unsupported.

I think the Cooperation of the Nizam doubtful, and our Dependance upon him for assistance equally so.

We long ago desired the Madras Government to consider the state of their Forts and Garrisons, and the Disposition of their Troops with a view to an eventual Junction of Tippoo with the French. We have now directed them to have their Army prepared for taking the field, and we are concerting the means of sending them assistance.

If the Nizam should shew a Disposition to take part against us, I shall endeavour to bring the Berar Rajah into the field against him.

I trust that our Army is improved in Discipline, since the promulgation of the Regulations, and I have no doubt that in the event of a War, their zeal and valour will be as conspicuous as they ever have been.

Report speaks of an Invasion of Hindostan by Zeman Shah, and with respect to his intention is entitled to credit; I have no suspicion that he meditates permanent conquest or to attack the Vizier's Territories, but that his object is predatory.

The Execution of his Intention will be hazardous unless he can obtain the Cooperation of the Siks, and Hostages for the continuance of it, and I have great doubt as to his success.

Under the present Circumstances, therefore, precautionary Instructions have been issued for measures to be adopted for the Security of the Vizier's Dominions. If Zeman Shah should come to Dehli, and if no preparations were made to oppose him, he might be tempted to extend his Depredations as far as Luknow.<sup>1</sup> I have directed particular attention to the conduct of the Rohilla's.

If Tippoo should commence Hostilities against the English, I shall not think of returning to England, as the vigour and energy of Lord Hobart will be particularly wanted in the Carnatic.

Notwithstanding your attention to furnish us with a strong Naval force, we are actually at this moment in a most defenceless state, and six French Frigates parade the Bay in triumph. The fundamental error was the Expedition against the Spice Islands, which I never approved. Our opposition arrived too late to stop it; I have never ceased to lament this Expedition, as we have risked by it much more than we can ever gain.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 13th Jan'y 1796, No. 9, and must confine my answer to it to two points only.

On reverting to my Correspondence with you, I am sorry to find much irregularity on my part in numbering my Letters, as I find some of the Numbers repeated, and some omitted; I enclose a List of the Letters which I have had the honor to address you from the 31st Dec. 1794.

<sup>1</sup> The dates of Zemaun Shah's invasions of India at this period are as follows: Dec., 1793, reached Peshawar but returned home; late autumn, 1794, again at Peshawar; late autumn, 1795, invaded the Punjab, returned to Peshawar, Jan., 1796; Nov., 1796, left Peshawar, arrived Lahore, Jan., 1797; Oct., 1798, left Peshawar, reached Lahore, returned to Peshawar, Jan., 1799. See Mountstuart Elphinstone, *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul*, II, 309-317 (1839 ed.).

I enclose a Copy of No. 4, which you mention not to have received, although the subject of it is now obsolete.

I return you my very sincere thanks for your obliging intention in favour of my Brother in Law, Lieutenant George Cornish.

An idea prevails here that the arrangement of his Majesty's Service, by which Staff Officers gain an advance of Rank, will be established here. If it should take place, I hope the Governor General's Military Secretary, whilst a military man will be included, and I think indeed he ought to have the advantage of Staff Rank which he has not at present.

I confess to you that my wish to serve Major Collins, who has served me with great ability and attachment, may have suggested the Proposition. You have had a Proof of the assistance which I have derived from him in the Military Arrangements which I had the honor to submit to you in January 1794.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Georgiana,  
1st April 1797

## XXVIII

No. 15

CALCUTTA  
11th Octo. 1796<sup>1</sup>

Dear Sir,

I had last the honor to write to you on the 9th ultimo, by the Georgiana, which having been detained in consequence of the appearance of the French Frigates in the Bay, I take the opportunity of adding a few lines to my address by this Conveyance.

The Nizam has applied to our Resident, to have the Detachment recalled: his motives are ostensibly friendly, but

<sup>1</sup> Part of this letter has been printed in Shore Corr., I, 386.

he has certainly in this Instance acted under the Influence of those of his Ministers, who wish to promote an Union between their Master and Tippoo. The Inconsistency of the Nizam's conduct is so evident, as to convince me that he is nearly in a state of Dotage; but notwithstanding the Suspicions dictated by his Proposition for the return of the Detachment, I am still of opinion that he will not enter into any Engagements with Tippoo Hostile to the Company.

The Party of Sindiah and the Bramins still maintains the ascendancy at Poonah.

I am I confess not without anxiety, as to Tippoo's interference in the Mahratta Contests, and of our Implication.

I have frequently revolved both the Obligation and Policy of our Interposition, if Tippoo should seize the opportunity to invade the Mahratta Territories, and I am at present inclined to admit the obligations of the Treaty as binding both upon us and the Nizam. I shall detail my Reasons in a Minute which I am preparing, but which I fear will not be ready to go by this Conveyance. But if a Civil War should take place previous to any attack by Tippoo, our Interference will be rather a Question of Expediency than Obligation; whilst there is a Peshwah our Connection remains, but if there should be two Peshwahs, each supported by a strong Party, the situation of Things would be changed, and the Obligations arising out of the Treaty might or might not be admitted in favor of one or the other. I speak with reference to an Invasion by Tippoo only, not to the Domestic Dissentions of the Mahrattas, and I hope and trust the Dilemma will not occur.

A very foolish Paragraph was lately inserted in one of our Gazettes. The Circumstance is trivial in itself, but I mention it only with a view to add, that the Publick Notice which I took of it, will I trust restrain the Editor in future within the bounds of Decency and Propriety.

I have the honor to be . . .

Rec'd per Georgiana,  
1st April 1797

## XXIX

BENGAL

10th January 1797<sup>1</sup>

Private  
The Right Honble  
Henry Dundas,  
Dear Sir,

I begin the present letter in much better health and Spirits than when I had last the honor to address you. The political Horizon was then gloomy, the ambiguous conduct of the Nizam, the Preparations of Tippoo, and the distracted situation of affairs at Poonah, involved so many alarming considerations, that I could not but deem the continuance of Peace in India doubtful, and in these Sentiments it was indispensably necessary to make Preparations against all Contingencies, without betraying apprehension. Since that Period we have had the inexpressible satisfaction to learn the Capture of the Dutch Fleet by Admiral Elphinstone, an Event of infinite Importance to the British Interests in India, whether considered in its immediate, or remote consequences;<sup>2</sup> the Conduct of the Nizam, has not only lost much of its ambiguity, but has been latterly ostensibly friendly; the Preparations of Tippoo have not been extended in any degree to excite new alarm, and the Settlement of the Succession at Poonah, has apparently put an end to the feuds which distracted the Mahratta Empire, and afforded a strong temptation to the interference of Tippoo. Our letter to the Secret Committee will furnish a detailed Explanation on these important topics and of our conduct. We have nevertheless ordered the Detachment assembled at Midnapore to proceed to Ganjam, for reasons stated in our official Letters.

<sup>1</sup> Part of the first paragraph is printed in Shore Corr., I, 398.

<sup>2</sup> On Aug. 17, 1796, the small Dutch fleet surrendered to Admiral Sir George Keith Elphinstone at Saldanha Bay, near Cape Town. See William James, *Naval History*, I, 416.



The Establishment of the Army Regulations has produced an effect beyond my Expectations, and satisfaction and good humour have completely supplanted turbulent discontent. The Rules prescribed for securing to the Sepoys, the Payment of their Monthly Salaries, have hitherto at least proved efficacious; and they cannot be impinged without the connivance of so many, that I think it next to impossible, that the Peculation which formerly prevailed, can ever be introduced again. The utmost Zeal and Cheerfulness were exhibited by them, when the Detachment was ordered to assemble at Midnapore, for the Carnatic Service, and I have not a doubt but they will proceed with the same alacrity and good humour, which they have hitherto shewn. The difference between their present and former situation is so great, that an Idea prevails amongst them, that they have had an increase of Pay. If Measures are to be judged of by their Effects, the Mode adopted by us, for carrying into Execution the Military Arrangements, has at least the merit of success in a most essential Point.

I wish I could lay before you as flattering a Picture of the State of our Finances. Our funds have in no instances failed excepting in the Article of the opium, which was not unexpected; but the extraordinary Supplies required for Madras and Bombay, for the encreased Expenses of this Government in the Military Department, for assisting the Supra Cargoes at China, with an addition of six Lacs to the Investment, have created Embarrassments, which will scarcely be relieved by the Resources of the 12 per Cent loan. We have received from it to this date about 32 Lacs, and shall at least require 18 more to enable us to close the year without Distress. Necessity has compelled us to receive the 12 per Cent Notes in Payment for Salt.

All our Merchants are greatly distressed, and have made repeated applications to Government for assistance. If it were in my power to grant relief it should not be withheld, but at present it is impossible, and unless we should be able to borrow much more than I expect, the impossibility will

remain. They complain of a great scarcity of money, in my apprehension, it is more a want of credit; the truth is that they have in general speculated far beyond their means, and being disappointed in their expected Returns, Distress is the consequence. I sincerely hope that they will survive it, and that their present Exigencies, will induce them in future to be more rational in their speculations, which have forced the Market unnaturally.

I have already hinted to you my doubts on the Regulations for the Police of this Country; experience compells me to confess that the Tax for defraying the Expenses of this department is as oppressive in Practice as it was objectionable in principle, and Barlow<sup>1</sup> who suggested it to Lord Cornwallis gives it up. I do not believe I could in any instance gratify the Natives of Bengal so much as by the abolition of it, which I have determined: but as the Exigencies of Government cannot at present well afford even this Diminution of the Resources, I propose to supply an equivalent amount, by augmenting the Fees on Suits, which will contribute also in some degree, to restrain the extraordinary propensity of the Natives in India to Litigation. These are the only instances in which I have deviated from the Regulations of Marquis Cornwallis; the Principle of them is untouched, and you will find that it has been invariably supported and promoted by me, by various other regulations having that express tendency. You will observe the greatest care and attention in us to preserve the separation established by him, in the different Departments of Government, that the Judicial is never confounded with the Ministerial Department, and that we prefer submitting to an Embarrassment arising from an attention to forms and Principles, to the Sacrifice of either to convenience. I shall invariably pursue the same conduct, whilst I remain in

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Hilario Barlow, 1762-1846; Governor-General temporarily after Cornwallis's death in 1805; Govr. of Madras, 1807-12. His name is usually associated with the mutiny at Madras in 1809, and he was not successful as Governor-General. See *D.N.B.*

India, and upon my Return will submit to you the impartial opinion of my Experience upon the whole System.

I have employed such measures as I judged most efficacious to prevail upon the Nabob of Oude, to consent to the Payment of a Regiment of Cavalry, or in other words, the agency of his Representative Tofuz[zoo]l Hossein Khan.<sup>1</sup> I am in some doubts how far it will be proper to lay this Explanation before the Honble the Court of Directors. Nothing satisfactory has yet been concluded. A Letter was certainly prepared, signifying the Vizier's acquiescence; it has not been received, and I cannot promise that it will ever arrive. If I should be ultimately disappointed, I shall then address the Nabob officially. That his consent might be procured by intimidation I believe, but I hold such Policy very unwise; during the War with Tippoo he assisted us in the most liberal manner with Elephants and Money, and would have given Troops if it had been required. Last year the Nabob on an intimation from me, without a moments hesitation, or enquiring my reasons, sent a peremptory order to Almas,<sup>2</sup> to place himself and his Troops under the authority of Sir Robert Abercromby. The order was fortunately superfluous, but if the occasion had required the execution of it, and the Nabob instead of having a confidence in this Government, had been suspicious of its designs, or indisposed towards it, the Troops of Almas might have been refused, or employed to assist the very Disorders, which they were required to controul. The Nabob has discharged his private Debts, not indeed with all the Equity which he might have observed, but with more than he would have followed, if he had acted with the full Independence

<sup>1</sup> Toffuzzool Hossein Khan, adviser to the Nawabs of Oudh, appears to have been a very able and honest man with a knowledge of the West and its ways. Sir John Shore held a high opinion of him. See Marshman, *op. cit.*, II, 67.

<sup>2</sup> Almas Ali Khan, the most influential large landholder, zemindar in Oudh. In later negotiations, the associate and confidant of the Begums of Oudh.

of an Eastern Despot. I trust he will not easily obtain credit in future.

From the knowledge which I have acquired of his Character, and from the inefficiency of all attempts to establish a good Administration in his Country, it appears to me that it can never be well governed by him, & that we are likely to lose much more than we shall gain, by importuning him to undertake what he has neither inclination nor Capacity to execute himself, nor any disposition to delegate that portion of authority to others without which no improved Administration can be established. His occupations are frivolous amusements, his prevailing passion accumulation, but whatever his fault or follies may be, I believe his attachment to the Company too strong to be overturned by any art or Intrigue; he has the good sense to see, that upon their support, his Power depends. For all political purposes our influence over him, is sufficient; but it is evaded, when we attempt to interfere in the internal Detail of his Country. In fact it would be difficult to prove our Right to such interference, although I regret that it cannot be more effectually exerted for the benefit of his subjects and to his real advantage.

Under the impressions of the disordered state of the Vizier's Government, an anxiety to improve it, and the hope of advantage both to the Nabob and the Company from effecting that Improvement, I have exerted every effort to accomplish it. I acknowledge with regret that my efforts have failed, and that having no authority to use any other modes than those of Conciliation, and occasionally alarming the fears of the Vizier by expatiating on the consequences of his mismanagement, the success of all future endeavours, without some favourable Chance which I cannot foresee, must be very dubious, and after all, I believe it will be wisest, to leave his internal Administration to himself, interfering only to prevent injustice or improper conduct, towards those who have a Right to the Protection of the Company, to maintain with care our political Influence over

him, and wait untill his Apprehension or Distresses, shall induce him to solicit our aid and interference, or accept them with Gratitude and Remuneration, and whenever such an opportunity occurs, I shall most readily embrace it. If this be deemed erroneous, other principles must be assumed, by declaring our determination to interfere, and acting accordingly. Any intermediate conduct must be involved in constant inconsistency and be subject to endless disappointments. The two Points which I should most wish to obtain from the Vizier are the possession of Allahabad, and a Tract of Country equal to the tribute; one or the other might possibly e'er this have been gained, if I had not attempted the Reform in his Administration.

Our situation from Owde is so remote, and our information of the actual state of affairs there so imperfect, and so liable to deception, that I have had occasion more than once to regret the necessity of forming determinations, where I could not see my way clearly before me. If I stay in India this Season, and can with any propriety leave Calcutta, I will certainly visit Owde, when I shall be able to form a more accurate Judgement of the state of Things in that Quarter, and of what can be done or attempted; I am also anxious to make my observations on the internal state of Bengal, and of the effect of the existing regulations on the prosperity of the Country and happiness of the People.

I acknowledge however that it is my wish to leave India this Season, and if a safe and convenient opportunity should offer for that purpose, I shall be happy to gratify the impatience of my Successor, by availing myself of it. At present however, I see no prospect of it, after the departure of the Ships now under Dispatch, none will remain; those that are expected will not leave Bengal before the middle of March, they will have a long Passage to Madras, a winter passage round the Cape, and the danger of interception will be proportionate to the length of the Voyage. These Circumstances without a Wife and Children would not deter or embarrass me; as I am situated, I must attend to them.

The Government of Madras made a reference to us on the subject of the Court's orders for discharging the Cavalry Debt, & I think you will give us some credit for recommending a Mode of Liquidation, not only satisfactory to the Creditors, but the most advantageous to the Company, which under existing circumstances could have been adopted. If the Proposition of the Accountant General at Madras had been admitted, it would have made a difference to the Company of more than 120,000 £, and I will venture to assure you, that if the Creditors had not full confidence in this Government, they would not have accepted the Terms offered to them. They are certainly advantageous to the Creditors, but no less so to the Company, and if you will examine the subject, or direct a Report to be made to you upon it, you will find that we have acted fairly honourably and beneficially to all Parties. My confidence of your approbation in this instance, is in proportion to the apprehensions which I entertained respecting the Execution of an order the effect of which could not be known at home, when it was issued, but threatened the most alarming consequences to the Public credit here.<sup>1</sup>

I have heard with some surprize that Lord Hobart has affected to consider my conduct as actuated by a decided opposition to his Person and Views, and with an astonishment which I cannot express, that he has insinuated that I might have checked the discontents of the Army in Bengal, if I had not been influenced by some private motive.

When Lord Hobart arrived in India, I put him fairly in Possession of my political Sentiments and Principles; he had no right to expect that I would renounce them, or that any measures in opposition to them, would have my concurrence: let the grounds of the differences of opinion between us be examined and let it be determined, whether I have acted

<sup>1</sup> The "Cavalry Debt" was the part of the Nawab of the Carnatic's debt contracted in 1777 "to pay arrears to a regiment of horse that the Nawab had to disband." See P. E. Roberts, *India under Wellesley*, p. 89.

consistently with my avowed Principles, whether I have exercised the controuling Power vested in me captiously, whether I sought the occasions which called forth my animadversions, or whether I could have passed them over without a Derelection of my Public Duty. Those who from long Experience of my conduct are best qualified to form a Judgement of my Character, will inform you that my disposition is averse from Controversy, that I approve with pleasure, & condemn with reluctance; that no personal dislike has ever influenced me to withhold the acknowledgement due to merit, and that my Strictures when extorted, are neither illiberal, nor unjustly severe: If these assertions can be disproved, the Public Records ought to afford that Refutation; if it can be found upon them, let it be produced. If with respect to Lord Hobart, I have acted at variance with my general temper and moderation, it is a solitary instance, not to be admitted upon assertion only, and I trust it is incapable of Proof. I have said so much both privately and publickly on the subject of the Army, and I have so fairly avowed to you my doubts and Embarrassments during the progress of their discontents, that I shall not here add much.

Let it be adverted to, that for Three years the Expectations of the Bengal army for a new Military Arrangement, were kept in suspence, that their Delegates were received in England, their Grievances acknowledged there, and Redress speedily and repeatedly promised. Under these circumstances, the most natural & prudent course for me to take, was to bear temperately with them, whilst their Proceedings did not exceed the limits of due Subordination. Severity would certainly have aggravated discontent, and their Proceedings would have been conducted with a Secrecy, which would have secured them from Public Notice, and the officers from Punishment whilst they would on this very account have been pregnant with danger. If we had had in Bengal half the Number of Kings Troops, which Lord Hobart commanded on the Coast, we might have acted dif-

ferently, but I know not that we should have acted more prudently. Severity would not have suppressed discontent; it would not have stifled the Expectations of the Army; it would not have produced the proper Sentiment of Subordination, or have induced them to attend to the neglected Duties of their Situations. Yet when to my astonishment, we were apprized of the intemperance of the Army at the upper Stations, we adopted Resolutions proportionate to the Emergency, and were prepared to enforce them at all hazards. The event has disappointed my Judgement, although the present state of the Army far exceeds my late expectations.

I have arraigned Lord Hobart's conduct in many instances, but I have never impeached his Motives.

So much for my conduct; I am too conscious of the Rectitude of my Principles to degrade them, by vindicating myself from the imputation of acting from unworthy motives, I am incapable of it, and I trust you are incapable of believing it.

Lord Hobart's arrival in India afforded me real satisfaction: The state of my health rendered my Residence here precarious, and I rejoiced at the appointment of a Successor, of whose abilities I had formed a high Estimate as well as of his Principles. I made advances for his confidence by offering him mine. I appeal to his Letters addressed to me individually as well as collectively, to his Minutes and Addresses to the Court of Directors, if they are calculated to encourage that confidential Communication, which ought to subsist between us, and which it was my wish to establish. Are they not in the highest degree intemperate and can the style of them be justified (considering our relative situations) by the tenderest sensibility in his Lordship for his own Reputation.

How much I have complained to you on a Subject, where I had so much right to complain, you know; and you may rest assured, that no asperities on the part of his Lordship shall ever provoke them on mine, that they shall never have



an influence on my public conduct, or motives; that I will still preserve my principles and Moderation and that his Lordship's Government shall ever have the warmest support of this on all proper occasions, and whilst by such a conduct I enjoy the consciousness of performing my Duty I hope no less to merit the continuance of your approbation.

Sir Robert Abercromby leaves us by this Dispatch; my respect and esteem for his Character have increased with my knowledge of it. The Company never had a more honourable upright zealous officer in their Service, and I think Abilities far more respectable than I was led to believe from the Reports of others: in a military point of view, I doubt if there is one amongst the Company's officers, whose Talents can be put in any comparison with his.

We have always acted together with the greatest cordiality, notwithstanding occasional differences of opinion.

Sir John Murray also leaves us, and it is but Justice to him to say that I regret his absence; and that I have been much indebted to his Services. I need not point out to you his ability to give you Information on various points; although I have sometimes thought that he speaks with more Confidence than knowledge.

I also lose a very valuable assistant in Lieutenant George Robinson, who so long enjoyed the confidence of Lord Cornwallis, and has since had mine. I have desired him to pay his respects to you.

I have the honor to be . . .

XXX

No.

BENGAL

27th January 1797

The Right Honble  
Henry Dundas,

Dear Sir,

You will find from our Public Dispatches, that I have determined to carry into Execution the Intimation conveyed

to you in my last address, of visiting Luknow. Since the Resolution was formed, and previous to any possible notification of it to the Nabob, he has earnestly solicited me to meet him, alarmed probably by an apprehension of the approach of Zeman Shah. I cannot yet bring my mind to entertain any fears on this account, but I have taken the same Precautions, as if I were morally certain of the Shah's approach. If he should reach Delhy, he can have no motive but the Plunder of Luknow, and his arrival there would be a Signal of Depredation and Insurrection for all the disaffected and armed Banditti with which the Upper Provinces abound. It has been suggested also that the Shah acts in concert with Tippoo and by French Intrigues; I am equally an Infidel on this Point, but at the same time aware of the Influence which his success might have on the Resolutions of Tippoo and the Politics of the Nizam; our Southern Detachment therefore proceeds; this will be an Indication that we are not alarmed, whilst it adds to our Security in the Northern Circars, and may eventually assist operations of a distant nature. I trust these Measures will appear to you Dictated by solid Principles.

Since writing the above I have received an official Letter from the Resident at Luknow, dated the 22d Jany. of which the following is an Extract.

"Para: 9. The several circumstances stated in the course of my Correspondence will clearly shew how small our dependance must be upon any Exertions to be made by the Vizier in the event of our being engaged in Hostilities, and although I trust that there are no grounds to suspect that he would himself betray us, yet I daily see more and more reason to fear that his present Servants are capable of every act of Treachery by which they conceive that our Influence may be diminished, and that they might be able to persuade their Master to adopt measures which would prove ultimately ruinous to himself under the pretence of relieving him from Subjection."

You will see that it contains irresistible Inducements for

me to undertake this Journey, which I promise you is not a Journey of pleasure or Convenience.

With respect to the Vizier I will pledge my life on his attachment to the Company: I have a Letter from him of the 23d. most earnestly solliciting me to come to him. I hope his fears of Zeman Shah will open his eyes to his true Interests, and enable me to promote the advantage of the Company: for this Purpose I promise you all the Zeal and Exertion of which I am capable; and although I go with an Expectation of succeeding, I can promise no more.

I have the honor to be . . .

Jany. 31

P.S. I leave Calcutta this evening.

### XXXI

#### No. 18

*Private*

The Right Honble Henry Dundas,

Dear Sir,

After an absence of exactly three months, I returned to Calcutta from Luknow on the 1st. Instant.

From the Letter which I wrote to you on the eve of my Departure from the Presidency, you will conclude that my expectations of the success of my Journey were not very extravagant. I undertook it with Reluctance, and I have now much Satisfaction in having accomplished it.

For the particulars of my Transactions at Luknow, I shall refer you to my Official Dispatches; the Result of them may be comprized in a few words. I prevailed upon the Nabob to dismiss and banish his favourite Jao Loll, who had constantly shewed himself enimical to our Interests, to appoint a New Minister, and to pay to the Company an additional Subsidy of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  Lacs per annum. It was my wish also to have obtained the Possession of Allahabad for the Company, and I certainly could have extorted it, but the Reluctance of the Vizier to relinquish the Possession of this

Fortress was insuperable by argument, or Persuasion: he had been taught to consider the Proposition as introductory to an attempt for depriving him of his Country, and I did not therefore urge what I could only expect to obtain by means which I did not deem myself warranted to use.

The Character of the Vizier is also amply described in my Public Letters and Minutes, and from the whole you will collect that he will never voluntarily submit to any sacrifices of his Power or Wealth, and that on the other hand he is totally deficient in ability, Vigour and Resolution for forming any Plan of Independancy or opposition to the Company; that if the Vices of his Character and Administration have a pernicious Influence on the Prosperity of his Country, they are a Security to Us. His Power is great, and might be dangerous, if he had the Capacity to improve and exert it; His Revenues notwithstanding the Defalcations from mismanagement are equal to all his Expenses, and even to furnish a Fund for accumulation.

I will not pretend to assert that the Concessions of the Vizier were voluntary; he yielded to persevering Importunity, aided by the habitual ascendancy of the Power of the Company over him, and the Weight of my Public Station. In my Presence he was ever submissive even to humiliation; he never attempted the Discussion of my Propositions, or any Reply to the arguments by which they were supported, yet he never would have yielded anything to the Language of Reason only. The only strong Expression which I used towards him, consisted in a Declaration, that I must decline visiting him, if he persisted in admitting Jao Loll to his Presence and Councils, and even this I would have avoided, if he had not imposed upon me the necessity of using it.

For some days before our Separation he was apparently in the best humour, and often talked with pleasure on the execution of a Project which he has long entertained of visiting Calcutta. I should rather dispense with his Company, but I shall make no hesitation to sacrifice my personal

convenience, to the Political advantages, which may result from the Impression which he would receive of the Power and Affluence of the Company, if he should persevere in his Intention to pay me a Visit.

After his return to Luknow from Fyzabad, to which place he accompanied me, he exhibited a Degree of Caprice and unprovoked ill humour, in his Behaviour to Colonel Palmer and to our Resident, which I did not expect; but it was as I foresaw followed by a Submission equally abject. This inconsistency of his Conduct gives us a perpetual advantage over him, and has a tendency to convince his Subjects, that no Dependance can be placed upon his Resolutions: He has the Passions of a Child, and I am now so thoroughly acquainted with his Character, that I have no apprehension of being able to manage him.

The acquisition of Allahabad is an object to which we must always look, and if Zeman Shah had advanced, I should have obtained it or have deemed myself justified in taking Possession of it, even against the Vizier's consent on the grounds of necessity. The Succession to his Government is also a point to be considered, and I am prepared with a little more leisure to state my Sentiments upon it. The age of the Vizier is about Fifty one; his health is vigorous, and has not yet suffered from the habitual use of opium in large Quantities.

Our Policy is evidently to maintain our Influence over him, through his Minister, and to interfere as little as possible with his amusements, or private Expences, leaving the pleasure, Discredit, or consequences of them to himself.

I have often mentioned to you my doubts respecting the *Police Tax*; it was evidently founded in partial & erroneous Principles, and Experience shewed that it was oppressive in the Collection, and most universally disgusting to the People. I am now happy to inform you that we have determined upon its abolition, and have established a new Fund, which I doubt not will be more productive whilst it will have the beneficial effect of promoting the General Distribu-

tion of Justice by checking mere Litigation. I allude to the Stamp Regulation, which was framed during my absence, but with my Consent & Assistance and which may I think be hereafter greatly extended.

The Madras Government have called upon us for a Supply of one Crore ten Lacs of Rupees during the Current year of Account, from May 1796 to May 1797, and Bombay will at least in my opinion require 50 Lacs, and the Expedition now on foot will probably require a Sum not less than 35 Lacs. You will see therefore that we were not improvident in endeavouring to meet these extraordinary Demands, by augmenting our Resources, and unless the Remittance Loan should furnish a supply at the Three Presidencies of nearly a Crore of Rupees, we shall find ourselves distressed. It has hitherto succeeded as well as could be expected at Calcutta, and I hope that we shall not be disappointed in our Expectations of obtaining Fifty Lacs from it.

The Preparations for the Expedition alluded to have occupied a great Portion of my Time and Attention since my Return to Calcutta. They were in a progressive State, but from the Miscalculation of the Madras Government with respect to the Tonnage, I found a Deficiency in that article only of 6000 Tons, and many other omissions, which I have endeavoured to supply with all possible activity and Success, and I have no doubt of our ability to carry it into Execution, unless it should be frustrated by unexpected Occurrences.

The Situation of Vice President had nearly proved fatal to Mr. Speke. A desperate Fanatic, of the Tribe of Seiks, having religiously devoted himself to Death, entered his House at ten in the morning of the 16th Instant, in the determined Resolution to destroy him. He murdered two of his Servants, and the escape of Mr. Speke was most providential. The assassin who had travelled from the Punjab to Calcutta with four Companions had been deprived of his Arms by the Magistrate of Purnea for rea-

sons at present unascertained, and a few days before his attempt, presented a Petition to Mr. Speke, as he was passing in his Carriage, praying the Restoration of them. The Petition was returned with an Intimation that he must present it another time, and this is the only apparent cause for his Violence. It was fortunate that he did not apply to me, as I might also have been equally the object of his Revenge.

I have the pleasure to inform you that my health has suffered less than usual at this Season. I quitted Luknow under the attack of a very severe Indisposition, but my Journey to Calcutta has restored my health, which I trust will be sufficient to enable me to go through the Duties of my Situation.

I have the honor to be . . .

Bengal,  
May 20th, 1797

## XXXII

No. 19

Duplicate

BENGAL  
13th September 1797

The Right Honble Henry Dundas,  
Dear Sir,

My last address was dated the 20th May, and although enough has since occurred to engage my constant attention, I have little of moment to communicate to you.

The most important event is the Relinquishment of the Expedition by Lord Hobart, for which under certain limitations he had the fullest sanction of this Government.<sup>1</sup> I am not yet in possession of his Lordship's reasons, although officially informed of his Determination, and have no doubt of the propriety of it. I could suggest such as probably

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Manila Expedition relinquished by Lord Hobart's orders. See C. Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 331.

influenced him, but I will not anticipate what you will receive with better authority. I am happy to add that no new Subjects of Disagreement have occurred between us; and can with great truth assure you that I never sought any.

The official Notification of the Reappointment of Marquis Cornwallis, has placed us all in a state of anxious expectation, & Lord Hobart, General Clarke, and Colonel Harris, in an unpleasant suspense. As to myself I can assure you that I never received more satisfactory Intelligence and had not a moment's hesitation in forming my Determination to avail myself of the Permission of the Honble Court to act as second to his Lordship, who has my Respect, Admiration, and Affection. The Period indeed would not have been long, as I had previously determined to leave India by the Ships of the approaching Season, and in this Determination I shall persist, unless it should be overruled by Circumstances to which I must with whatever Reluctance submit. The Intelligence by the Albion extra Ship, which has not brought me either Public or Private Letters, speaks of his Lordship's departure from England as uncertain, or rather that he no longer means to revisit India, and this I confess will be a great Disappointment to me. It is of much more Importance to us than you seem to be aware of, to furnish us with the latest possible Information from Europe of any Event which may bear upon the Politics of India, or the Administration here. Of this nature are the late unexpected Successes of the French, and the Pacification with the Emperor.<sup>1</sup> A Decision also upon the Affairs of Owde, with References from Fort St. George on the subject of Tanjour, are in suspense for the arrival of his Lordship.

The Vizier has lately behaved much as usual, and I have been under the necessity of allowing his Minister Tof-

<sup>1</sup> This refers to Napoleon's Italian campaigns, and the impending conclusion of peace with Austria, ultimately signed at Campo Formio in October, 1797.



fuz[zoo]l Hossein Khan to visit Calcutta. Indeed I have a motive for it which is not publicly recorded, as I have no Official Authority for it, the alarming state of the Vizier's Health, in consequence of excessive Indulgence in the use of opium and Spirituous Liquors. He is seldom seen by our Resident, but in a state of Intoxication, and in this Situation he exhibited himself lately at a very solemn Mahommedan Festival. Without an alteration in his present Regimen, he will not survive many months, and the Succession on its approach appears more embarrassing than it appeared from a more distant view. It is upon this subject that I wish to consult his Minister who with the first abilities and unblemished Reputation wants that firmness which is essential to his situation.

You will learn that the Reports of the threatened Invasion of Zeman Shah have never subsided. I give however little credit to them, as to the practicability of the attempt; by the latest accounts from Cabul, the Shah has proceeded with his Army in a contrary direction towards Candahar and Hirat in consequence of some Disturbances in those Provinces. My official Minutes contain all that Information or Reflection have supplied on the Subject.

The Intelligence of the appointment of Marquis Cornwallis, excited no alarm in the Army; you will read the Reflections of Lord Hobart on this Subject and mine in reply. The Commander in Chief was decidedly of opinion with me, that the Army was perfectly quiet; at Fort St. George they have always entertained apprehensions which we never felt here.

Of the Finances of this Government I was in hopes to have had the Estimates in sufficient readiness to lay before you some remarks upon them, but they will not be ready before the 15th or 16th and without detaining the Public Dispatches, I fear I shall not be able to send you my observations. You will find generally that we have tolerably well provided for the demands of the Year, without adding to the incumbrances at home; That notwithstanding the Ex-

pences of the Armament for the Expedition, we are under less Embarrassment than we were sometime ago, and that the Investment has been raised to its usual Standard. Our Difficulties either in this respect, or in any other, are so comparatively inferior to those which you have to contend with in Europe, that I will not dwell upon them, and only assure you of my constant attention to provide against them as far as possible. I shall however rejoice to see my Successor whoever he may be.

I have the honor to be . . .

## XXXIII

No. 20

*Duplicate*

BENGAL  
Nov. 25th, 1797

The Right Honble  
Henry Dundas,

Dear Sir,

The death of the Nabob Vizier, and the unsettled state of the administration of Owde, has compelled me to undertake a Journey to Luknow in hopes of forming some arrangements on the principle of mutual benefit between the two States.

The succession to the late Nabob has occupied more of my attention & sollicitude, than any political Event which has occurred since my accession to the Government; my official Minutes will explain my Embarrassment and the grounds of it.

I received late last night a Letter from the Elder Begum, with a private Letter from the Resident to the Persian Translator, which I opened. I am not authorized to use it officially but the following Conclusions evidently arise from these Documents.

That the Elder Begum is disposed to maintain her own controul, and in this view has not only leagued with Almas

but the young Nabob, whose Conduct though grossly indecent and degrading she defends. I always suspected that this was her motive in her ready acknowledgement of Vizier Ali's Succession and her Letter to me as well as her whole Conduct proves the Suspicion to be just. I shall know what line of conduct to adopt when I am upon the spot; but if the Begum perseveres in her opposition to the Minister, or in other words, to the Company, the Question will be briefly this, whether we are to resign Owde to her Government and that of Almas and leave the Country, or maintain our Influence there by force. The Resident is however of opinion, that she will not carry matters to this extremity.

I expect to reach Benaras on the night of the 30th and Luknow by the 5th December, provided I can proceed from Benaras without personal danger, which would have no weight with me, if it were not combined with political hazard. I find I have undertaken an arduous Duty, but I do not despair of settling things on a proper footing, and hope to return to Calcutta so as to embark on the *Britannica* for Europe.

So many reports are current respecting the Succession to this Government, that I am not without some apprehension that a Successor may arrive during my absence; this would give me no other concern than [that] after his arrival my acts would be nugatory. I shall however do my Duty and leave the rest to Providence.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be . . .

R/14 May

#### XXXIV

The Right Honble Henry Dundas  
Dear Sir,

I had the honor to receive your Letter of the 15th August by an Overland Dispatch on the 27th Inst. announcing to

<sup>1</sup> For particulars, see *infra*, pp. 159-182.

me the probable appointment of Lord Mornington as my Successor to the Government General, and the gracious Intention of His Majesty at your Recommendation to confer upon me an Irish Peerage or the Order of the Bath as an unambiguous Proof of his Approbation of my Services.

With Talents inferior to many, in Zeal and good Intent on record to none, I cannot but feel the most lively Satisfaction and Gratitude, at this distinguished Mark of Royal Favor and of your Approbation of my Endeavours to promote the public Service. With better health I might have done more, and some of the most painful Hours which I have felt in India have passed under the sense of disqualifications from Disease in the exercise of my public Duty.

Permit me also to offer you my particular Acknowledgements for the gratifying Terms in which you have expressed your Sense of my Conduct. Of this I could always be assured, that the object of your choice for the Government of Bengal, should never entail upon you the Reproach, of having selected a Man without Integrity. The Defects of my Ability I have endeavoured to supply by patient Investigation and Deliberation.

My Successor shall have my most cordial assistance, and chearfull cooperation, as long as I remain in India after his arrival.

By the public Advices you are informed of my Determination to proceed to Luknow. The Motives in which it was grounded, and the unprecedented Situation in which I have been placed here. The Result has terminated in the Deposition of Vizier Ali from the Musnud of Owde, and the Elevation of the Nabob Saadit Ali Khaun, the eldest surviving Son of the Nabob Sujah Ud Dowlah, and whilst I am assured that the measure is supported by Justice, I have also the satisfaction to know that such is the public sense of it, and to believe that it has promoted the Reputation of the Company for Honor and Justice in India. In this connection I adopted it not without apprehensions as to the consequences, the Revolution however was affected

without Tumult, Insurrection, or the loss of a Life, on the 21st of this Month, and all has since remained in perfect tranquillity.

The Nabob Saadit Khaun, was almost personally unknown in Lucknow from an absence of twenty Years and nothing but the Conviction of His Right to the Musnud could have ensured his peaceful Elevation to it. I now remain here to give stability to the Succession and settle the Arrangements connected with it. If I consulted my personal ease and Wishes I should immediately on the receipt of your Letter have repaired to Calcutta, but I have always considered myself as the Servant of the public, and after the Approbation bestowed upon me, I can have neither motive or Inclination to renounce those Sentiments. My Departure however cannot be long protracted if Lord Mornington should arrive as soon as he may be expected.

I have the honor to be . . .

Lucknow

Jany. 20, 1798

### XXXV

The Right Honble

Henry Dundas, &c, &c.

Sir,

I have the Honor to acquaint you with my Arrival this day at Portsmouth.

My last Address to You, was dated from Luknow, in which I informed you generally of the very important Revolution effected there. I shall be most happy to learn that the anxiety attending the most embarrassing Situation, in which I had ever the misfortune to be placed, is repaid with your Approbation, as I doubt not it will be attended with great political Advantage.

I shall lose no Time in repairing to Town, and paying my respects to You there. In subscribing the Title which

his Majesty has been graciously pleased to confer upon me, I cannot but recollect how much I am indebted to You for it, nor omit the Repetition of my Acknowledgements.

I have the Honor to be . . .

Portsmouth  
October 17, 1798

## **APPENDICES**





## APPENDIX A

### POLITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE STATE OF HINDUSTAN WRITTEN ABOUT MARCH 25TH, 1793

If the principles of Conduct, adopted by the different Potentates of India with respect to each other, were the same as those professed by the British Nation, & the Delegates of the East India Company, political Speculation, would be restricted within very narrow Limits, and the attention of this Government, would be rarely distracted, from the pleasing duties of internal Arrangement. But whilst we publicly avow without hesitation the Renunciation of ambitious Conquests, an inviolable Adherence to our Engagements, a determination to maintain our Rights, & Territories and those of our allies, without suffering or committing Incroachments, and observe good Faith, and moderation in all Transactions, We shall find the Political System of the Eastern Powers, of a very different Complexion.

An Administration acting up to the principles which I have detailed, and supported by such real Power as we possess, can have little to fear from the Force or Intrigues of other Nations, and although our Dominion may for a Time be convulsed by their Efforts, can never sink under them. The same virtues, which conciliate Esteem, & respect in private Society, are the Sources of public Honour, & political Reputation; they are the foundation of Friendships in domestic, of confidence & Alliance, in national Intercourse, and it may be fairly presumed that without a dereliction of our Principles, we shall never be totally abandoned by our Allies. An adherence to them under all Circumstances, is therefore indispensable, and We shall in Politics, as in all other Cases, find Ease as well as Security in our Rectitude,

in as much as it is easier and safer, to proceed in a strait Line, than to pursue a winding distorted Course.

But whilst we are sure of our own principles, & morally certain that they form the strongest Barrier, against the hostile Inroachments of Ambition, and Intrigues of Jealousy, we must not overlook, the Motives, by which our Neighbours are actuated, & supinely rely upon the Influence of our Conduct, to controul them. Our real, & in fact only Security, is our power, that depends on the Equity, Wisdom & Humanity of our Internal Government, and as long as it rests upon these foundations, will never be subverted; and whilst it is competent to repel Ambition, we may trust to the rectitude, of our political principles & the Moderation of our Conduct, to disarm the Jealousy, which national power ever has a tendency to excite. These Positions are too evident to require exemplification, but it appears so obvious in the Events of the late War, that it cannot be overlooked.

That War so just in its origin, so glorious in its conclusion has occasioned an important Alteration in the political State of Hindostan, and the Ambition of the Allied Powers, (the English excepted) no longer restrained by the dread of an haughty, ambitious intollerant Despot, has a wider range for enterprize, and new Allurements for exertion.

The Balance of Power, is however decidedly in the hands of the English, & it is their Interest to hold it as Steady as possible, without risking an implication in the Consequences, if their Efforts to preserve it, should prove ineffectual.

To succeed in this, we must not only watch events as they arise but carefully study the genius, Manners & form of Government of the People with whom we are by Friendship or Situation connected as furnishing the most solid Means of Judgement, with respect to their probable Views and Conduct. With this Knowledge, assisted by that of the Characters of the Individuals, who compose their Administrations, we shall seldom be erroneous in our Conclu-

sions, or dubious as to the Measures which we ought to pursue.

The Mahratta Dominion is an Aristocracy which connects many discordant Individuals but Avarice, Ambition, and Rapacity, are the ruling Principles not only of the Paramount Government of Poonah, but of all the feudatory Chieftains. Cautious in deliberation, slow & circumspect in decision, wily & provident in their choice of measures, the Poonah Ministers are never betrayed into precipitate concessions. Intrenched by forms and ceremonials, with the observance of which they never dispense, they trust to delay and procrastination, as the safest Rules of political conduct. Jealousy and suspicion, form an essential part of their Characters, and are often pretended, & assumed, on false grounds, with a view to different Objects. A Zeal for their religion, may be fairly imputed to them, as a Secondary passion subordinate to political Views & at present may be considered as a dormant principle, which Time & Circumstances may at a favourable Opportunity, rouse into Action.

To penetrate the real Motives, or decypher the artful Measures of such an Administration, through the veil of Mystery & Secrecy with which they are covered is always difficult, often impossible, and very rarely necessary, as long as we adhere to our professed principles, & in fact there is more danger in doing too much, than in doing little; the discovery of their Views is oftener effected, by an apparent Indifference to them than by employing direct modes of enquiry. The same caution seems necessary, to insure the Success of our negotiations with them; in proportion to the Urgency with which the proposed Object is pursued, their Caution & reserve increase, for their Jealousy takes alarm at every new proposition, augments with Importunity, and success is often attained by a Suspension of the Measures apparently calculated to ensure it. In all our transactions with the Mahrattas, the advantages derived from prudent forbearance, are evident.

Nothing can exhibit a greater contrast, than the candid liberality of our policy with the concealed Art of the Mahratta Administration; the honor and delicacy of our Conduct with the meanness & Indelicacy of theirs: a promptitude to take Advantage of our liberality, without any Idea of granting a return, and a disposition to encroach, without any sense of shame on its being repelled, frequently occur in their negotiations with us, but the dignified firmness of Lord Cornwallis's Administration, has imposed Silence on Claims, which a Weak Conduct would have encouraged.

The nature of the Poonah Administration is singular. The titular head of the State, is a phantom residing at Sitarah whose Person is invisible & unapproachable, and whose name never appears, but on the Impression of the Seals affixed to Treaties & Publick Deeds. He is to all active purposes inexistent. The Person who ought to be the ostensible Sovereign is the Peshwah. He is at present fettered by the trammels of Minority, and the real, & efficient power of the State, is held and exerted, by the Minister Balagee pundit or Nana pharnavese.<sup>1</sup>

This is the person with whom all the Business between our Government, and the Mahratta State is transacted, & his Conduct in general has been as fair, candid & amicable as We could in the nature of things expect. The timidity of his Character gives additional Strength to the political principles of the Government.

The power of the Minister, depends upon the Countenance of the peshwa, his Connection with the principal Officers, amongst whom we first reckon Hurry Pundit, and in some Degree on the friendship of the great feudatory Chieftains, such as Sindiah & Tuccojee Holkar. In their various & incessant Intrigues for Authority, it is no part of our policy to interfere, and any Attempts from us, to support one party, or one Individual against another, would be impru-

<sup>1</sup> See James Cunningham Grant Duff, *A History of the Mahrattas* (ed. S. M. Edwardes), vol. II, chs. xxxv. and xxxvi.

dent & dangerous. Our Connection is with the State, and not with the Individuals, who compose the Administration.

During the late Contest with Tippoo, a party appeared at Poonah favourable to his Interests, known by the name of the Rasla Family. They are related to the Peshwah, and made no scruple to avow their Opinions and Attachments; there is not however any reason to conclude, that their bias in favour of Tippoo, tended to abate the Regard of the Peshwah for them, or to produce any Coolness or Dissensions between them and the Minister; nor did it operate to the Prejudice of our Interests.

The Mahratta Administration is braminical, and all the principal Offices of Government, whether civil or Military, are either in the possession of Bramins, or so disposed as to be under their Controul.

The Arrival of Sindiah at the Mahratta Court, may be deemed an important occurrence to the Interests of that State. Amidst the various reasons assigned for his Appearance, there are two only which seem to be probable. First, the expectation of participating in the Advantages gained by the Success of the Allies by introducing his Interference in any practicable Mode, Secondly the exclusive establishment of his own Authority in the Northern parts of Hindostan, by procuring the recall of the Commissions given to Ali Behader & Tuckojee Holkar, and the appointment of himself as the Delegate of the Mahratta Power.

For the accomplishment of these Objects, no opportunity could be more favourable than that which he chose, as the principal forces of the State under the Command of Hurry Pundit & Perseram Bhow were then absent, and he had the precaution to support his pretensions by the attendance of a Strong Army. But the Conclusion of the Peace, so much earlier, than he expected, put a stop at once to his first Object. In the second, he seems to have persevered with unremitting attention by endeavouring to conciliate the Peshwah and establish an Influence with him. To Judge of his probable success or Disappointment, we

ought to be better acquainted with the Character of the Peshwah, than we now are, as well as with the Views & Dispositions of the Officers of the Mahratta State, but the following reflections on this Subject may assist our Conjectures as to the Event. The Power, Success, and assumed Independancy of Sindiah have long been Objects of Jealousy to the Poonah Government, whom he has not admitted to any Participation of his Conquests, By the fundamental Laws of their Policy they have Claims to a participation, & though Prudential motives, may incline them to a Forbearance of their Claims, they never allow them to be relinquished. We must of course conclude, that the Minister will not yield to a demand, which will encrease Sindiahs Independancy as long as he can evade or resist it, & it is probable that he will in the end succeed by one Mode or other.

The Jealousy excited by Sindiah's Pretensions & Intrigues, must naturally be augmented by the Manner in which they are carried on, for the Minister cannot view without disgust an Attempt to seduce the Affections of the Peshwah, and diminish his own influence, with his Sovereign.

I consider the ostentatious Display of regal Honours, procured through Sindiahs Mediation for the Peshwah as a part of his Plan of conciliation intended to flatter the Peshwah's Vanity, rather than as originating in the Motives assigned by Mr. Mallet, allowing at the same time, that the Mahrattas would be ready to use the nominal Authority bestowed upon them if any advantage could be gained by it.

Thus private & public Motives, equally concur, to stimulate and Confirm the Opposition of Nanapharnavese to Sindiahs Intrigues, & as the latter seems to form his expectations of succeeding, principally on his acquiring an Ascendancy over the Peshwah, without having the Support of a Strong party, or powerfull Individuals, the probability of his Disappointment may be fairly presumed.

This will be effected by the studied Delays of the Mahratta Minister, who must be perfectly sensible that Sindiah's Absence from his own Territories cannot be long protracted, without Inconvenience Danger, and a Ruinous expence. Sindiah in this Instance seems to have acted without sufficient Foresight, & has in great measure placed himself in the power of the Minister; delay daily adds to the Risque & precariousness of his Situation.

But after all, supposing Sindiah successfull in the apparent accomplishment of the Objects of his Journey by means of which we are apprized I do not see that he would derive any important Advantages from it; unless he could procure the dismissal of Nana & place a Creature of his own in the Ministry, this in fact would be tantamount to the subversion of the Mahratta State & I think the possibility of it scarcely admissable.

His Influence with the Peshwah must soon cease after his return, and the Minister from Resentment in addition to the Motives which now urge his Opposition to Sindiah, would be inclined to embarass him by all the Means in his power. In short it appears to me that Sindiah can gain nothing by the improvident policy which has led him to Poonah.

His novel Connection with the Nizam seems originally to have been formed without any precise definable Object, and to have been suggested by Vague views & indeterminate speculations. Both parties may have enter'd into these Engagements, in the hope of deriving Support from each other's Influence; and the Nizam in particular may expect to find in Sindiah's friendship, a Barrier against the apprehended Usurpations of the Poonah Government. If the Information which we have received be true, that Sindiah has extracted considerable sums from the Nizam, some temptation must have been held out of which we are not well instructed or possibly the Nizam's Minister may have Views distinct from the interests of his Master. This supposition is very probable; be that as it may, to me it seems

that the connection will be ultimately of little Use to either party, and possibly inconvenient to the Nizam, if Sindiah's Intrigues should fail of success. The Mahratta Minister must lose something of his cordiality towards a prince, who has no hesitation in expressing his good wishes to his opponent, and personal Enmity may rouse into Action the propensity of the Poonah Government to encroach on the Territories of their Ally.

The Power of the Nizam, on a comparison with that of Tippoo, and the Mahrattas must be deemed far inferior to both, and would probably sink, in a contest with either of them.

Whatever his political abilities may have been at an earlier period, the vigour of his mind and body, is debilitated by sickness and age.

The Variety Profusion & inconsistent conduct of his Minister Azimul Omrah, who has obtained a complete ascendancy over his Master, are ill calculated to support the dignity of his Government externally, or to promote the happiness of his Subjects, & conciliate their affection. The numerous rabble whom the Nizam calls his army are ill paid and worse disciplined, nor does the Nizam appear, to have any Generals of military knowledge or abilities. It is likely however that the life of the Nizam will not be protracted much longer, and his Eldest son Ali Jah notwithstanding the opposite views of the Minister, or of other Individuals, with respect to the succession, will probably obtain it without a contest, common reports speak favorably of his character and abilities, but the Judgement upon it must be postponed, untill he is at liberty to act for himself. With respect to Tippoo Suldaun, some years must I think elapse before he will be in a capacity to molest his neighbours. There is every reason to suppose that his delay in fulfilling the pecuniary terms of pacification arises principally from his inability to discharge the amount which he agreed to pay, and if we were assured of this of which there is no reason to doubt the procrastination of the pay-



ment would be of little Importance, or rather a solid Security for his Conduct. His losses by the war may have moderated the violence, without changing the principles of his Character, but the defalcation of his Territories, and the deprivation of his property, will impose silence on his resentment, and restraint upon his ambition.

In considering the terms of pacification and the various and clashing interests which were to be consulted in the adjustment, I see the strongest reasons, to applaud the wisdom and moderation that dictated it. The Brilliant success dignified firmness, inviolable faith, and conciliatory disposition of Lord Cornwallis, had given him an ascendancy over the Ministers of the allied powers, which was never greater than at the moment when peace was made, and relying upon the unimpeachable honour and integrity of his character, they cheerfully submitted the interests of their respective states to his decision. To have protracted the war for the capture of Seringepattam would have been highly impolitic, and success would have involved us in inextricable Embarrassments; it is impossible to foresee to what extent the claims of the Allies would have risen, or how they could have been adjusted. Tippoo himself might probably have escaped to some of his fortresses in the mountains, and have carried on a predatory war, which would have required another campaign to extinguish. No one will argue, that it would have been wise to have made an entire partition of his Territories amongst the Allies, such a Measure would have thrown too decided a weight in the scale of the Mahrattas, already too powerfull: policy certainly dictated the propriety of an independent sovereign, over the mysorean States, possessed of power sufficient to serve as a barrier, but inadequate to the object of successfull invasion. The question could only be in this case, whether that independency should be left with Tippoo or be transferred to the ancient sovereigns of mysore. The antipathy which every briton bears to Tippoo, would hastily pronounce a Decision against him, without considering the Consequences of it;

that his substitute must have been supported by the same power, which restored him to the Throne, at the risk of improving the experience of the Natives in the arts of War, and probably at an expence, which would not have been compensated by the acquisition of additional Revenues. Our choice then must have fallen upon Tippoo, and the advantages gained over him by the Allies, being already sufficient for reducing his Power within proper limits, it was surely unnecessary to prosecute that advantage, under the risks which I have already mentioned and with the certainty of sacrificing a number of brave Men, for the further diminution of Power which we meant afterwards to restore to him. The Mahrattas & the Nizam concurring in this reasoning, or from other motives, expressed their hearty approbation of the Peace, as well as of the terms on which it was concluded.

The late War naturally suggests some very important reflections on the disparity of the forces employed for the establishment of our influence in India, and subsequently for maintaining it.

At a period not very remote from the present, a small number of Troops commanded by English Officers ventured to oppose with success the numerous Armies of the Native Powers, and the inequality of numbers was of little avail, against the united efforts of valour and discipline. The Natives have now imitated our Arts, and we dare no longer trust a body of Men in the Field, that formerly would have penetrated through the opposition of all India and though it may be presumed that the Princes of Hindustan, from defects inherent in the constitution of their Governments, and from a mistrust of Europeans, will never be able to introduce that discipline in their Armies which we have established in ours, or in other words to have as good soldiers as we command, they may attain a point of perfection fatal to the permanency of our possessions in the East. The conclusion therefore to be drawn from this reasoning is, that war should be avoided as the bane of our Interests,

a conclusion deducible also upon other Grounds, and sanctioned by the Legislature of great Britain.

Throughout Hindustan there are but four states of importance, the Poonah Mahrattas, Tippoo Sultaun, The Nizam, and Seindia, and it is our interest to keep upon good Terms with them all, and more particularly with the Mahrattas. I do not consider the Berar Government, or Tucojee Holkar so formidable, or usefull as to render any specific alliance with them requisite and with respect to them, nothing more seems necessary, than an amicable intercourse. Whether the sics [Sikhs] are ever likely to become formidable, is at present a remote speculation, and the first efforts of their power, on the supposition of its increase, would probably be directed against some of the new conquests of Sindia.

The Territories of the Vizier are open to their incursions, and an object of temptation to Seindia, who I have no doubt would be inclined to extend his conquests that way, if his treaties with the English, and more particularly their protecting Arms, did not oppose a Barrier against him; but in speculating upon possible events, and the operation of dormant principles, it may be usefull also to reflect, upon the best means of prevention and in this light to consider, whether the nature of our forces in Oude, and their position, are the best calculated to deter invasion, or suppress it, if it should take place.

It is pleasing to reflect on the respectability of our national character, as it stands at this time with the powers of India, and that it never was higher at any period. That state from which we had most to fear, is too mutilated and depressed, to excite any Alarm, and with others a friendly Alliance, has been established. The spirit of Jealousy and Ambition which animates them all, is in one sense a collateral security to us; its operation without our participation and direction, must necessarily tend to invest the balance of power, in our Hands, where it should be steadily preserved without throwing a preponderance into either of

the scales. With respect to our acquisitions on the malabar Coast our principal object should be to conciliate our new subjects. I consider the Revenue as subordinate in importance but both objects should be united: by proper care & attention, in establishing good Regulations & in enforcing them, the new settlements may rise to great commercial importance, & to this we ought principally to look.

So much for the political state of India and if my reflections upon it are just, the direction of circumstances, by fixed principles, will seldom be found very embarrassing.

J. Shore

## APPENDIX B

### DOCUMENTS CONCERNING THE MUTINIOUS DISCONTENT IN THE BENGAL ARMY

(a)

#### An Anonymous Confidential Communication on the Subject of the Army.<sup>1</sup>

To judge of the Disposition of the Army in the Upper Provinces by the general Report of their Sentiments, nothing can be conceived more dangerous than their tendency. It is not necessary to explain the grounds of their Claims, but the grounds of these Claims are so before the Nation, that I am confident they are aware that Justice will be done to them. It is the delay in promulgating the Regulations to which they look, which creates a multitude of extraordinary ideas.

The most concise Information which I can give, is comprised in the idea of Generals and Legislators among young Men. Their Proceedings are very secret, and cannot be known but from the Mouths of those who possess not Prudence enough to keep their own Counsels. This Knowledge is very imperfect. They look on the delay in the arrival of Public Advices from England while so many Kings Troops are embarking for India, as designed and inimical to their Expectations. They talk of opposing their Landing, of resisting Regulations not consonant to their Ideas, of combining to oppose the orders of Government for the March of Detachments from the Army, on the Principle that the more the Army is together the more powerful will be their means of Resistance. The spirit appears to have risen to a height that allows every Individual to discuss all

<sup>1</sup> Enclosed in No. 8, dated 12 Jan. 1796.

orders with a violence that perhaps was never known. Unfortunately this delay in the arrival of positive Replies from England has furnished occasion for all the Sensations which first gave rise to their Petitions to ferment, and every News Paper Report operates forcibly on every Individual.

For some Months past their own Intelligence from England has fluctuated, and such seems to be their Disposition, that a Report however unfavourable is obliterated by a favourable one. I do not believe that the Army has any other Disposition, than such as might be wished, unless their Expectations are wholly Disappointed Ultimately, but at the same time I think that their Impatience does not permit them to reflect on the value of the Tribunal, before which the cause is pending.

If your Advices from England can enable you to Publish to the Army any Period or Probability of one, for the arrival, of the Decision on their Claims, I should recommend such a step, for I conceive that their Impatience is more alarming than their Disposition towards the Government. But I should at the same time advise every Precaution against the Impatience of Men, who conceive themselves as labouring under hardships, and who, although divided as they might be supposed, by Gradations of Rank, Difference of Situation, and variety of Interests, appear in a manner unaccountable to me, to be unanimous. As among their Resolves a short time ago, the March of the Troops from hence to the Presidency was determined upon to enforce their own Sentiments, to oppose the Landing of the King's Troops, and the separation of their own Body by Detachments, and was set aside by advices of a favourable Nature from England, these seem to be the means, which, if obliged, they intend to employ. I must however under this Conclusion say that I think, that any Assurances from you would contribute to allay their Impatience, for there are among them, as far as I can judge, Men who possess Judgment that can discover the Value of such assurance.

I have heard that a Petition has lately been presented to you. The arrival of Advices either by the Princess of Wales, or of some subsequent date, has contributed to stir up discontent, which was before completely done away, by assurances that the new modelling of the army would come to India this Season; the Paragraph in the Mirror stating that Mr. Dundas was gone to Scotland, was dissatisfactory as tending to postpone this Event. To such advices as these may be attributed any Violence which may occur more than to any other grounds of Disposition to Disturbance in the army. Excuse the freedom of these Remarks, they are founded on Information not deserving of much Reliance, for very little reaches me.

(b)

Sir John Shore to Lord Hobart, Jan. 23, 1796.

My Lord

The personal labours which have lately fallen to my share, have prevented an earlier Communication to you of a subject of great Importance, and the same reason must limit the Terms of my present address.

Your Lordship has already learned, from Report, the Discontents prevailing amongst the officers of the Bengal Army; and if a Judgement were to be formed of the disposition of the whole, from the Intemperate Language of Individuals, the Army must long ago have been pronounced to be in a state of Mutiny.

That their Expectations have been much disappointed, in the protracted arrival of the Regulations, I am willing to admit; nor was I surprized or alarmed, at any Impressions of Impatience or Vexation in Individuals; but as I had reason to believe that much Industry had been exerted to impress the officers with a belief, that the arrangement was designedly delayed, that his Majesty was averse to the proposed Extension of Rank, the Court of Directors to

Augmentation of Expence, and that no beneficial Arrangement would be made; it was judged advisable, on the authority of the enclosed Extract of a Letter which I received from England, and other Documents, to publish the declaration of the 7th December; in the Expectation that it would restrain Impatience, encourage the Moderate, and counteract the Effect of Reports, circulated by the Insidious, and too easily adopted by the anxious or undiscerning.

That the declaration had a considerable Effect on the Minds of many, is indubitable; it confirmed them in opposing the Intemperate Proceedings of others, the general Nature of which I find reason to suspect, as they were carried on under Obligations of Secrecy, which precluded any Knowledge of the particulars.

This Knowledge was not obtained, until the Plans of the officers were transmitted from the Upper Stations of the Army Futtighur and Khanpore, to the Presidency. They are contained in those Documents entitled as follows:

#### General Principles

Primary Points suggested on which the determination of the Army is required as a guide to the Executive Board.

Election Construction, and Powers of the Executive Board of Army delegates.

And as it is not in my power to transmit Copies of them to your Lordship at present, I shall summarily state the substance of the Propositions contained in them.

We have in these documents the plan of a general Association of the Army, for the Redress of Grievances, and assertion of its Rights. The Sense of the Army is to be collected by Stationary Committees, and to be through them conveyed to an Executive Committee, composed of thirteen Members, which is to be formed for the purpose of concentrating, and giving Efficiency to the Will of the whole. The Executive Committee is to be made the Organ of Communication between the Army and the Government;



and the inviolability of the persons composing it, is to be supported under a solemn assurance, at whatever Risque. This Committee is to be declared and announced to Government as the Representative of the Army, to meet in Fort William, to carry on its proceedings there, by defined rules, and the Members, whatever their Private Opinions may be, are required to pay implicit Obedience to the Will of the Majority of the Stations.

The objects of the Association are pointed out in the Paper entitled Primary Points suggested, on which the determination of the Army is required as a Guide to the Executive Board. They are stated in the form of Queries and if they be understood to comprize the Determination of the Army, they are of the most dangerous Tendency.

The Spirit of the Memorial of 1794 is to form the groundwork of the Arrangement of the Army, the Executive Board is to protest in its name, against any points, differing from the Expectations set forth in that Memorial, and to *adjust* them with Government.

A Query is introduced as to the Resolutions of the Army, if Government should reject any proposed organization, and as to the Measures to be adopted on any appearance of coercion or on the Arrival of more Kings Troops. It is also suggested to propose to the Armies of the Three Presidencies to unite in the Common Cause; and the possibility of the dreadful alternative of plunging into a Sea of Anarchy and Confusion is intimated in the form of a query for investing the Executive Board with full Power to meet any Emergency.

The Result of the whole may be comprized in this Short Exposition, that the Army impatient at the delay in the arrival of the Regulations is determined to constitute itself the Judge of its own Rights, and to assert them at all Hazards.

These Projects appear to have been carried on by the officers at Futtighur and Khanpore, subsequent to the Publication of the declaration; of the Proceedings at Futtighur

our intelligence is imperfect, but we know that they have been most violent there, and we are informed that Notwithstanding the Efforts of the Command'g officer at Khanpore, and the opposition of many officers of Rank and respectability, at that Station, the Disaffected had actually proceeded to the Nomination of their Delegates on the 6th January.

To Check this Intemperance, and Restore due order, and Subordination, at the Upper Stations of the Army, the Commander in Chief, with that Zeal which marks his Character on all occasions, judged it expedient to proceed there himself and set out from Calcutta for that purpose on the Evening of the 20th.

I cannot detail all the Reports or Intelligence which I have received of the Conduct of the officers of this Army. That Propositions of the most violent Nature have been agitated, to the Renunciation of all Subordination, and that even the propriety of seizing the persons of the Governor General, and Commander in Chief, was submitted in the form of a query, we have Information.

It is our determined Resolution to put a Stop to the progress of Association, and we trust that the presence and authority of the Commander in Chief, invested with full Powers for this purpose, and aided by such other means as we can adopt will be found fully competent to this Effect.

Without therefore any serious apprehensions of opposition to the authority of the Commander in Chief, for which the Officers at the Upper Stations do not appear to us either determined, or sufficiently prepared, or unanimous; it is our duty, under present Circumstances, to take all practicable Precautions against the worst consequences and I am desired by the Board to communicate with your Lordship on the Subject.

I have therefore to propose to your Lordship to request Sir G. K. Elphinstone to hold the Squadron under his Com-

mand, or a Considerable proportion of it in readiness to proceed to Bengal upon the first intimation from me of the necessity of it, and that your Lordship will also have ready any body of European Troops particularly his Majesty's, that you can spare to embark for Bengal, at the shortest Notice. At all Events as any addition to our European Force is important, we should be glad if any of the German Recruits from the Cape, who may have been entertained for the Service of your Presidency, or any others, can be spared, and sent round to Bengal.

It is not our wish that any Preparations should be made, beyond what I have proposed to your Lordship, and as I trust there will be no necessity for carrying the Measures intended by them into Execution. It is proper that the Object of the Preparations should not be known, nor suspected. I am satisfied that the Native Troops, notwithstanding the Relaxation of discipline, in which they have too long been, could not be prevailed upon to take part with the officers against Government, if any should be so abandoned and desperate as to make the attempt; but the Consequences of a Mutiny amongst the officers might be very serious, from the alarming Diminution of our European Troops in Bengal.

Although many officers at all the Stations have been implicated, more or less, in unjustifiable Proceedings I have no apprehension of any Commotion at Fort William; and for this reason have avoided adopting such Measures, as in case of necessity might be resorted to, least they should excite a Suspicion amongst the Natives, that Government was alarmed, and produce prejudicial Effects upon Public Credit. The Artillery Corps, with some Exceptions of no Consequence, have expressed a determined opposition to the Plans and Proceedings of the Violent Party; and have refused all Communication with them. His Majesty's 76th Regiment, weak indeed in Numbers, is in Garrison; and we shall in a few days have a very respectable body of well

disciplined Native Troops, under the Command of an officer on whom I can rely. Upon the whole it appears to me, that the Association, notwithstanding the length to which it has been carried, may be now effectually checked without any Commotion; but that if it were not suppressed, it would soon exceed the limits of all Controul, involving ultimately perhaps the Subversion of the British Authority in India.

It will be proper, in this place, to apprise your Lordship of the Reasons, which induced me to command the March of the Detachment, destined for the Service of your Presidency. The Sepoys, as has been reported, never refused to march, but one of the Battalions showed some Symptoms of discontent at the Service, and there was some apprehension that it might extend to others; although I have reason to be satisfied that the Dissatisfaction would not have proceeded to the length of disobedience.

Under these Circumstances, considering the accession to your force on the Coast, by the Augmentation of Meuron's Regiment,<sup>1</sup> by the Recruits sent, and going, from Bengal, and by the possible speedy return of Major Robart's Detachment, and the relief of the Troops of your Establishment, on the Columbo Expedition, by the assistance which you will receive from Bombay, and Malabar; We did not conceive your Exigencies of so urgent a Nature as to induce us to risque any Question between this Government, and the Native Troops at this period; particularly after the recent experience of Insubordination at Midnapore; and considering the Impression made upon the Native Troops by that unfortunate Transaction.

I have the honor to be . . .

Fort William

23d January 1796.

The Paper referred to is a Transcript of a Letter which

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Swiss regiment of the Count de Meuron, the transfer of which from Dutch to British service was of so much importance to the British capture of Columbo in 1795-96. See *The Cleghorn Papers*, ed. Wm. Neil, London, 1927.

was received by Mr. Duncan from D S<sup>1</sup> in England and therefore not sent.

(c)

Sir John Shore to Lord Hobart, Jan. 25, 1796.

BENGAL

January 25th 1796

My Lord,

I have the honor to resume the Subject of my Address to your Lordship, under the date the 23d Instant.

I before mentioned to your Lordship that the officers at the Khanpore Station had nominated their Delegates; but from a wish to over rule the Opposition of the Artillery, and other respectable officers, and to obtain their Concurrence in this measure, they had suspended their Confirmation of their Nomination. Two Meetings were accordingly held at Khanpore on the 8th and 12th Instant, and although the Artillery were strongly solicited, and urged to be present, they positively refused, with scarce an Exception; on this principle, that their absence would prove a more effectual Check on the violent party, than any opposition of Individuals at the Meeting of the 8th, and the Report of the Transactions of the 12th has been communicated to me in the following Terms of a letter from Khanpore of the 13th Instant.

“Yesterday’s Meeting was the last Effort; the Artillery stood resolute, and would not go, the Moderates of the Infantry carried the day. No Delegates were appointed, and all further Meetings given up, but they insisted, and were not refused that their (the Jacobines) Names, as being Staunch to the Cause, and our Names as opposers, should be sent to all the different Stations, There were only about Thirty (Officers and Surgeons) in all who attended the

<sup>1</sup> David Scott of Dunninald, friend of Dundas, long a Director of the East India Company; Chairman 1796, 1801; Deputy-Chairman, 1795, 1800. See Haydn’s *Book of Dignities*.

Meeting Yesterday, and the persons of highest Rank were two Captains."

We are still less informed on the Proceedings at Futti-ghur, but the present disposition of the Officers at Khan-pore seems more favorable to the Efforts of the Commander in Chief, for restoring Order and Subordination than we had reason to hope from the former Accounts; and I have no grounds for any alteration in the Sentiments Communicated to your Lordship in my address of the 23d.

The Measures already adopted appear to have made a considerable Impression in the minds of many, and have recalled them to useful Reflections. In a few days I shall receive accurate Information from the Commander in Chief, who will probably reach Khanpore early in the ensuing Month, and that must decide upon the necessity of Sus-pending, or prosecuting, the Preparations suggested to your Lordship, to the End intended by them.

I have the honor to be . . .

## APPENDIX C

### NARRATIVE OF THE REVOLUTION IN OUDH

Memorandum of Occurrences attending the Revolution at Owde subsequent to my Removal to Bibeepore on the 10th of January 1798.<sup>1</sup>

Bibeipore is the name of a Country House built by Mr. Ives when Resident at Lucknow, and distant from it five miles. The grounds of the Resolution which I found to remove to that place are stated in my public Minutes; under any circumstances and any resolution my removal from Lucknow was expedient.

On the evening of the 9th I dispatched my Instructions to the Resident at Benares to communicate to the Nabob Saadit Ali Khan the Engagement which I had drawn out for his Acquiescence or rejection. I still, however considered the accomplishment of the Object proposed by the Engagement liable to contingencies as my public Instructions declared.

I left Lucknow early in the morning of the 10th, and found Almas on horseback at the Gate, waiting to attend me. In my way to Bibeepore we met a Battalion of Nijeeb Troops under the Authority of Almas, marching to Lucknow from Ingdeespore. The Embarrassment of Almas at the Rencontre was visibly great. During Breakfast at Bibeepore he was in the room and entered into Conversation with Tofuzl Hosseen Khan on the subject of the Battalion,

<sup>1</sup> For an understanding of this document, the following facts should be kept in mind. The elder Begum was the mother of Asoph-ud-Daula, the recently deceased Nawab of Oudh; the younger Begum, the wife of Asoph-ud-Daula; Mirza Jungly, a younger brother of Saadat Ali, himself brother of the deceased Asoph; Almas, a wealthy and very powerful land-owner in Oudh. Proper names are spelled exactly as they appear in the original MS.

pretended to deny that it was moving to Lucknow by his directions, and in his vexation exclaimed why did the Blockheads march this road? What other road could they take said Tofuzl—they might have gone twenty other ways replied Almas. It was from Almas amongst others, that I was particularly apprized of the Orders of Vizier Ali for assembling Troops at Lucknow, but he carefully concealed that any were coming by his directions, and the detection was attended by a Confusion which he could not conceal.

The Nabob & Begum were apprized by Letter of my determination to leave Lucknow, with the reasons for it and having cause to apprehend that some disturbances might ensue in consequence, I particularly recommended the safety of the City to their care. The Nabob attended to this recommendation by publishing an Order throughout the City, in terms grossly insulting to the English.

Both he & the Begum were however greatly alarmed at my removal, and the more so as they entertained suspicion of each other. They replied to my Letter by expressing their determination to follow me to Bebiepore, and the Nabob accordingly ordered out his Tents there the same day, and on the 11th in the Morning came uninvited to visit me.

I repeated to him the reasons which had induced me to leave the City, mentioned the march of two Battalions & the secret introduction of other Troops. He denied any Knowledge of either & offered to break the commanding Officer of Almas's Battalion, which was never done.

The Nabob uninvited repeated his visit to me on the 12th, and being now much alarmed, made unqualified professions of Obedience, promising to follow my Advice & to consider me as his only friend.

I told him that amongst those who called themselves his friends, there were many his secret Enemies; & that it was a great misfortune that he himself had not made the distinction. He replied that he knew it, and desired me to take him by the hand; This I evaded, assuring him at the



same time, that as long as he behaved well he should not want a protector in me, & at a time when he least expected it.

This day the Ministers were appointed by the Nabob at my House. I had pressed the matter before for several reasons, because there was in fact no Minister, and the confusion in all public Offices was daily encreasing; because I knew that it would introduce disunion in the Councils of the Nabob, whilst it served to amuse the public attention, and divert it from the Object which I then meditated. Their appointment was the more necessary as in my Letter of the 10th to the Nabob, announcing my determination to reside at Bebiepore I had informed him that I should transact my business with him through his new Ministers. Almas on the part of the Begum had requested that the investiture of the Ministers might be performed solely by the Begum, without even acquainting the Nabob with it. This I declined as indecorous & irregular, and the investiture of the Ministers by the Nabob at my House served to distract the Councils of the Begum and disunite her Interests from those of the Nabob. It led her to suspect that I meant to make terms with Vizier Ali, although the Ministers were in fact of her party.

On the 13th I made my final resolution to place Saadit Ali upon the Musnud and upon a supposition of his Acquiescence in the Terms which I had proposed I wrote to the Agent at Benares to recommend to him to set off immediately for Khanpore. The means for accelerating his Journey had been previously taken without his knowledge. From this date I determined if possible to avoid any farther Intercourse with Vizier Ali. An indisposition of three days; the 14th, 15th & 16th furnished a seasonable Apology for declining to receive his Visits.

The Nabob, through his father in law, Sherf Ali on my first arrival at Lucknow had requested to be permitted to make a donation to the European Regiment. The proposition was repeated & discountenanced. It was evident that

the Nabob entertained the foolish idea of corrupting or conciliating the English Soldiery. An occurrence on the 15th or 16th shewed this intention strongly. Meeting some European Soldiers the Nabob gave to each a Gold Mohur, promised a like Sum to all their Comrades, and for this purpose ordered immediately 1200 Gold Mohurs to be brought to him. Having obtained information of the Fact & promise, I directed the Resident to require from Sheif Ali Khan an explanation of the Nabob's Conduct. He admitted the Facts, but imputed the donations to the Solicitations of the Soldiers.

On the 17th at the earnest desire of the Begum, I visited her at her Tent. The Nabob was present, and the Agent of communication between myself and the Begum. She particularly wished to have a private Conference with me; but the presence of the Nabob prevented it. She availed herself of the opportunity to press a request which she declared to be the principal object of her coming to Bebiepore, & of her anxiety to see me, for my return to Lucknow, which I evaded. The younger Begum and most of the principal people of Lucknow followed me to Bebiepore.

It is remarkable that Almas who constantly attended my breakfast Table & who previous to my Removal from Lucknow had almost daily conferences with me, had since my arrival at Bebiepore, carefully avoided any private meeting. He apparently apprehended a requisition for an explanation on the subject of his Battalion; the Circumstance dwelt much upon his mind, and he attempted in various modes to explain away his knowledge of it's [sic] march.

On the 17th & 18th I had various Conferences with the Ministers introductory to general Arrangement. They seemed anxious only to make their own personal Arrangements with respect to the Offices at their disposal, and to introduce their Relations and dependants into them. Sheif Ali Khan was a competitor for the patronage, but Hossein Reza Khan monopolized almost every office for himself & his Relations—quoting my Recommendation to the Nabob

as authority. This occupation was in fact a mere farce, but not unimportant as it afforded me time to employ my Reflections on the mode of carrying into execution the object which I had in view without disturbance, and to prevent the discovery of it until concealment should be no longer necessary.

Early on the 19th in the Morning, by Horse Expresses, stationed for that purpose, I received the News of the arrival of Saadit Ali at Khanpore. His motions after his arrival at Benares had been closely watched, and the intelligence of his Interviews with the Agent at Benares had been regularly & accurately reported by the Nabob's Newsman to Sheif Ali, who superintended the Department of Intelligence; & by him to me until the 17th. The sudden arrival of Saadit Ali at Benares by Dauk, or Post, on the 2d instant, the Intelligence of which reached Lucknow on the 3d, had excited suspicion & alarm; by degrees they had subsided, & the appointment of the Ministers, the expectations excited by it, & the occupations in consequence, seemed to engross the public attention, & to divert it from Saadit Ali.

A report had been circulated that Saadit Ali was coming to Lucknow by the direct road of Juanpore escorted by the Company's Troops; the Intelligence of his actual departure from Benares reached Lucknow a little later than my information of his arrival at Khanpore, but his real destination was absolutely unknown to the public. General Stuart who commanded at Khanpore had been secretly apprized that he was to expect Saadit Ali; he was directed to prepare for his Reception & to hold a body of Troops in readiness to escort him on his Journey to Lucknow without delay. Saadit Ali arrived at Khanpore at 3 o'clock in the morning of the 19th and at 6 began his march for Lucknow.

It was now necessary to take my final measures for placing Saadit Ali on the Musnud. It was my original intention to have proclaimed him as soon as I learnt his arrival at Khanpore; to communicate my intentions to the Begum,

the Nabob & the principal people by Letters, and for this purpose the Proclamation & Letters had been previously prepared.

But upon farther consideration I deemed it most prudent to prepare the public Mind more gradually for the change lest a sudden declaration of the subversion of his power should stimulate Vizier Ali and his adherents to opposition or furnish a pretence for it. I knew that doubt and hesitation would at first occupy the Public Mind, that the interval of Saadit Ali's arrival was not sufficient to concert any measures for serious opposition, that the Begum & Almas, who had committed themselves in favor of Mirza Jungly were to be conciliated or intimidated and that those who had sworn allegiance to Vizier Ali, would require some Time & Reflection to make up their Minds to the Transfer of their Allegiance at the expence of their Oaths. I relied, above all, on the operation of the general opinion of the right of Saadit Ali to the Musnud, and that few could be induced to oppose him. The Nabob & Begum still maintained an apparent Union, but it was in fact dissolved, and there was little probability that they would be re-united. The Begum, Almas, Jouher Ali Khan & Hossein Reza had committed themselves beyond all power of Retraction, unless they were determined to oppose my measures at all hazards and without a shadow of justifiable pretence. Tickert Bai had also been privy to the plan in favor of Mirza Jungly, who had entered into secret Engagements with the Begum, and the Transaction was publicly talked of, and had reached the Nabob. Hossein Reza on the 17th, had explained himself in the most unreserved manner to me with respect to Vizier Ali; he had asserted the notoriety of his spurious Birth, the Begum's knowledge of it, his own condemnation of the alliance between the daughter of Sheif Ali his relation & Vizier Ali, and acknowledged the Truth of an anecdote which I had learnt from others, that when Sheif Ali was boasting to him of the honor conferred upon him by this Alliance, he pointed to the real father of Vizier Ali,

who was present at the Celebration of his Nuptials & told Sheif Ali to take notice of his relation.

I determined therefore to lead these people into farther commitments from which they would find it more difficult to retract & then state my determination in favor of Saadit Ali to them. I accordingly sent notice to Jouher Ali Khan, Almas, Hossein Reza & Tickert Bai to attend me. The two latter had been previously prepared to expect something extraordinary. The whole party, excepting Almas who was in Town, met at my House by Eleven; he did not arrive until One, and the four being then assembled in the presence of the Commander in Chief, the Resident, Persian Translator and myself, the following *Conversation*<sup>1</sup> took place.

I opened the conversation by stating to them that I had convened them upon a subject of the last importance to the Interests of both States, and as such bespoke their particular attention.

I observed that Vizier Ali had succeeded to the Musnud of Oude by apparent Right, as the eldest Son of the late Nabob Asoph ud Dowlah, and the selection of the Begum; that tho' not unapprised of the Rumours that prevailed respecting him, yet the Reports that reached me at Calcutta could not be deemed a sufficient ground to subvert his apparent Right, which must hold good until disproved. That since my arrival I had however found it to be the universal Opinion that neither Vizier Ali nor any of the reputed Sons of the Nabob had any right and (turning to Almas, Jowaker Ali and Hussein Reza) that it had been most explicitly declared by the Begum, through Almas, by Almas himself, and by Hussein Reza, that Vizier Ali had neither right by Birth nor Qualifications for the Musnud. If that be admitted it remained to be asked who has the right to it? Jowaker Ali endeavoured to apologize for the Begum's acquiescence and to throw the elevation of Vizier Ali on the Resident and Minister, that the latter had par-

<sup>1</sup> N. B. This conversation was taken by the Persian Translator, corrected by the recollection of the Resident. [Shore's own note.]

ticularly informed her of the necessity of the immediate appointment of a Successor, and hinted that Vizier Ali was attending with expectation in the adjoining room, I repeated the above statement several times with great solemnity and little variation before any other Answer was obtained to it, but "whoever you think proper." I observed that this was not a matter of selection but a question of right, and upon this principle explicitly referred to them whether the right did not rest in the Sons of Shujah Ud Dowlah; they signified their acquiescence, and again referring to which of them it belonged, to the elder or younger, Hussein Reza replied the Elder, which answer appeared to have the concurrence of the rest: but he afterwards, seemingly at the suggestion of Ticket Bai, who whispered in his Ear, qualified it by adding, provided there be no disqualification. Jowaker Ali Khan, however threw out some doubts as to the primo geniture of Saadit Ali Khan, which he soon relinquished upon my Observation that it had ever been invariably allowed and acknowledged. I then proceeded to observe that my whole object was to obey the dictates of Justice, that I was answerable not only to the people of this Country for my measures upon this occasion, but to my King and those whose representative I was; that I knew that the Begum had another person in view than Saadit Ali, but that it was impossible for me to adopt any other principle of decision than that of right and Justice, and that principle pointed out Saadit Ali Khan as the rightful successor to the late Nabob. If that principle were departed from what dependance could the Begum herself have upon my honor, and justice when I pledged myself, as I did, to be the guarantee of her rights, honor and dignity; What reliance could the other powers of Hindostan with whom the Company were connected by Treaty have upon my good faith, if I violated the Laws of Justice on the present occasion. With regard to the hint thrown out of Saadit Ali Khan's disqualifications, I observed that he (Saadit Ali) had not lived for many Years in these Provinces, that

people could not possibly tell what he was or was not, but that for my own part, I had never heard anything of him that could constitute such disqualification, that it could not be assumed that if the question of the Succession depended on qualifications, as the right was admitted to rest with the Sons of Sujah ud Dowlah, an enquiry into their relative Qualifications must be made which was evidently out of the Question. I further stated that I had left Calcutta without any intention of effecting a change in the Succession; that with respect to Saadit Ali he (S. A.) was actually on his way to Calcutta when I quitted it; that on my arrival at Juanpore I received a Letter from Saadit Ali expressing his solicitude to visit Lucknow for the purpose of paying his respects to the Begum, and performing the mourning Ceremonies, and intimating that my present intention of proceeding thither afforded the only opportunity he could have of doing so. That I wrote in reply, desiring him to return to Benares and there wait until I could determine whether or not circumstances would admit of his proceeding for the purposes mentioned in his Letter; That it was only since my arrival at Lucknow that I had acquired such information respecting Vizier Ali's want of title to the Musnud, as induced me upon the principle of Justice to adopt my present resolution. In the course of conversation I more than once declared that I considered the Company and myself to be the guarantee of the Rights and dignity of the Begum; and Hussein Reza and Jowaker Ali Khan made professions in reply on the part of the Begum, of her entire reliance upon my favor. To a proposition of Almas, that Saadit Ali should receive his Khelaut of investiture at the hands of the Begum, I gave my concurrence, professing my great readiness to conform to her wishes in every article consistent with right and Justice. I encouraged them all to declare their Sentiments freely upon what I had said to them, and offered to retire that they might consult among themselves with the more freedom, but they declined it acknowledging at the same time, the justice of

what I had advanced. I then observed, that as it was now decided what was to be done, it remained to settle the mode of effecting it, and desired their sentiments upon that head, adding that it was my most earnest desire that it should be brought about without any disturbance, that it would give me great concern if a single man were hurt, that I was satisfied (turning to Almas) that there was no reason to apprehend any in the districts under his Charge, but that there was no knowing to what violence Vizier Ali with the counsel of the bad Characters about him, might resort, and that I wished to know what measures they would recommend to prevent the occurrence of disturbance. They all declined giving any opinion on the subject but proposed to go and consult the Begum. I observed upon this to Almas that it was unnecessary; that as the Begum would act by his advice it was only necessary for him to tell me what advice he would give her. He admitted it, but I could obtain no definite answer from him. To a Question which I put to Almas, what he thought Vizier Ali would do when informed of my determination, he said he would, he thought, make off to Town. In the course of the Conversation Almas Ali Khan observed, that Accounts had been received of Saadit Ali's having quitted Benares, and asked where he was, and Hussein Reza Khan took a paper of News from his pocket, which mentioned that on leaving Benares he took the road to Juanpore. I then apprized them, that he was actually arrived at Cawnpore and on his march to Lucknow. Almas observed that if he had come by Juanpore it would have been better as his travelling by the Route of Cawnpore would excite fears and apprehensions. After further conversation on this head in which nothing was settled, I withdrew into a private apartment with Almas.

In one part of the general Conversation I took occasion to repeat what I had mentioned with a particular reference to Almas, the principles of our connection with Oude which I had before explained to him with a view to remove apprehensions, injurious to my real views, and false reports about



them. I observed that the Company being bound to defend the Dominions of Oude against all Enemies had an undoubted claim upon this State for the Expence incurred thereby, & also for such arrangements as might be necessary for the security of our Troops stationed there; that beyond this they wanted nothing, and that if it had been in contemplation to take possession of the Country (which all apprehended or affected to apprehend) the measures adopted here since the accession of Vizier Ali, would fully have justified the measure.

In my private communications with Almas I endeavoured by an apparent Confidence, to give him confidence, & extract his opinion as to the best mode of effecting the Revolution without Commotion. I reminded him of the declarations which he had made to me of the influence of the Begum and himself over the Troops and to preserve the peace of the City. I recapitulated what he had said of his influence over Ibrahim Beg the Darogah of the Artillery from whose violence I apprehended most opposition. I told him that his and the Begum's Assistance would be duly acknowledged; that I depended upon it, and had the greatest reliance and confidence in both. He recommended to me to seize Vizier Ali, which I refused as being treacherous and contrary to the Principles of our Conduct, and I dismissed him with strong recommendations & assurances on my part, and promises on his to do all that I wished. I directed him to go to the Begum and recommend to her to go immediately to town, being assured that for her own sake, she would suffer no disturbances which she could prevent. I urged in a strong manner my apprehension of disturbances in the City and my earnest wish to prevent them.

During this long conference Sheif Ali Khan, was waiting in my House, in great suspense & anxiety; when it was over I sent for him and told him that I would acquaint the Nabob in the morning with my intention, and that for this purpose I hoped the Nabob would call upon me in the morning. I gave Sheif Ali all the encouragement I could without com-

mittment; his suspicions readily dictated that the object of our conference could not be favorable to his interests, and altho' I wished this suspicion to operate I also wished to [deepen] the impression in some degree.

20th January.

I sent an Apology early in the morning to Vizier Ali declining to see him and begged he would send Asherif Ali Khan to me to whom I would communicate what I had to say. He came about 9 o'Clock. After a short interval I told him with real concern that having matters of a very unpleasant nature to communicate to the Nabob, and feeling the utmost reluctance to communicate them personally, I had sent for him not only as related to the Nabob, but as a person who, from his regard for him, would represent in a manner the least disagreeable, what I was forced to tell him. That he had heard, no doubt, that the Nabob Saadit Ali Khan, was on his way from Khanpore to Lucknow, that he was coming by my desire, and under a determination on my part to place him on the Musnud. That my determination was formed upon the grounds of his right, the universal opinion that Vizier Ali had no right, and my ascertainment of the truth of that opinion; that I regretted the necessity, but it was unavoidable.

To this Asherif Ali replied, that Vizier Ali was ready to do every thing I wished, would make any concession of Money, Territory, Forts or what I pleased; that the Nabob Asoph ud Dowlah always called him Son, and as such he had been introduced to various Governors, that as such he had appointed him his Deputy, as such married him and invited me to the Wedding.

All this I admitted acknowledging that Vizier Ali had been introduced to me by Asoph ud Dowlah as his Son, but that did not give him any Claim of Birthright to the Musnud; it was unnecessary and indecorous in me to state the popular opinions on this subject or the real fact which was

now within my knowledge—to this he made no answer. I then said that Saadit Ali would be seated on the Musnud as the rightful Successor; that although I did this because it was just and right, that I by no means meant to injure the Nabob farther, on the contrary that I would now take him by the hand, which I had before declined to do in his presence; that as all opposition on the part of the Nabob would be fruitless, occasion the loss of Lives uselessly and terminate in his own destruction, I trusted Vizier Ali would not be so mad as to make the attempt, or yield to the influence of bad advisers; on the contrary I relied on his influence over the Nabob to restrain him, and that he might assure Vizier Ali from me that although he was deprived of the Musnud he should be taken care of, and that his honour and dignity should be provided for by a suitable Pension. I also told him plainly that neither the Begum nor Almas would support him as they actually meditated his dethronement and would have effected [it] themselves with my permission.

This was all urged and insisted upon & Ashreef Ali went away promising that the Nabob should act in conformity to my directions.

It was the opinion of most that I ought to seize Vizier Ali & Almas, and it was strongly urged that I should be answerable for every drop of blood which was shed in consequence of my not doing it: I did not apprehend any such consequence.

With respect to Almas, his seizure would have thrown half the Country into confusion immediately and the example would have spread like Contagion, the restoration of order would have been long & difficult; besides he had so committed himself that he had not a shadow of pretence left for opposition. I trusted to the impression of our superior power over him, and to the Fears of the Begum. With respect to Vizier Ali, he was within my power, & I relied upon my ascendancy to controul his conduct through the influence of those whose interests were materially concerned

in preventing any violence on his part. His situation was materially changed; the Begum who supported him was no longer in league with him and Vizier Ali and his friends knew they could not rely upon her. In the course of the morning various reports were spread of preparations made for his departure from Camp to Lucknow; I found them upon enquiry false. They said he had 700 Horse near him, and Horses provided for his escape, and I heard that he had a secret-council at which Erzut Ali, Waris Ali & Kanazad Khan were present. This was certainly true.

I again sent for Ashreef Ali and repeated to him what I had said; he promised submission on the part of the nabob and I exacted a solemn oath from him that Vizier Ali should not leave the encampment; he promised to oppose it himself if attempted and to acquaint me immediately.

The reports and alarms were again renewed; distrusting Ashreef Ali's report of my assurances and explanations to the nabob in a proper mode, I sent for Cassim Ali Khan, a man of much better character who had always been closely connected with the late Asoph ud Dowlah, and who I understood had always disapproved of the measures of Vizier Ali. I repeated nearly to him what I had said to Ashreef Ali, told him the promises of the latter and my reliance upon his efforts to second them. He said that after the death of Asoph ud Dowlah he had wished to have no connection with the new Court, that he had withdrawn from it, but was invited to it, received kindness & favours for which he felt grateful, but that he had never asked or wished for any employment. He promised to use his utmost endeavours to console Vizier Ali, impress upon him my promises, and urge his implicit acquiescence in my will.

All this occupied the day till between four and five o'Clock, during which the Reports of Military preparations were for the most part alarming. I learnt that after a private council at the Nabob's tent, in which it had been strongly urged to the Nabob to withdraw to town and act a desperate part, he had finally relinquished the plan by the advice of

Ashreef Ali and Cassim Ali and an Eunuch of whose influence I also availed myself, Afreen Ali Khan.

In further assistance of my plan to secure Vizier Ali without violence I wrote a Letter to him conciliatory and promisory and sent it through Molurvee Abdul Cadur with Instructions to enforce the contents of it. The Molurvee found him melancholy and desponding, he performed his Commission well. Vizier Ali complained to the Molurvee of the Begum and Almas, referred to the oaths and Engagements entered into by the former and exclaimed What has become of her Oaths, her religion and the Coran! he shed tears and submitted.

Tofuzzul Hussein Khan came to me in great alarm and advised me to seize Vizier Ali without delay. This is Hindostan not Europe, (he said) Affairs cannot be done here as they are in Europe. I told him of the Oaths & assurances of Sherif Ali, he said that they could not be depended upon. He urged his Advice very strongly chiefly on a report of Meer Tehseen, that Vizier Ali was secretly prepared to make his escape at night. My aversion to use treachery to a person who had put himself in my power, altho' against my consent, the apprehension that his seizure would excite alarm, and the reliance which I had upon my own measures, induced me to reject the advice of Tofuzzul Hussein Khan.

Between 4 & 5 o'Clock, the Resident informed me that Mirza Tuckea the favourite & confidant of the Begum had been with him urging on the part of the Begum strongly that Mirza Jungly should be placed on the Musnud, intimating that disturbances would ensue if Saadit Ali were brought to Lucknow, and that he would take no answer from him but begged to come to me. I admitted him. He began by asking me if I wished to consult the Begum's wishes, & urged them strongly in favor of Mirza Jungly; that he was universally liked and Saadit Ali Khan detested. I replied that the matter had been fully discussed yesterday; that the right of Saadit Ali Khan as first born was un-

doubted, and that the Company would only act according to justice. He answered that there was a difference of a few Months only, in the Ages of Saadit Ali Khan and Mirza Jungly, that the rule of succession was not so fixed by Law or Usage, as to determine always in favor of the eldest, particularly as he was an improper person, and Mirza Jungly had no disqualification. All this I repelled. The Arguments were repeated and answered with a degree of temper on my part, that neither the Character nor behavior of Mirza Tuckea warranted. I promised always to consider the honor & dignity of the Begum, and that Saadit Ali would be equally attentive to them, and Mirza Tuckea finding my resolution fixed, promised that the Begum would abide by it. I advised her to go immediately to Town, in order to prevent any disturbances and be ready to give the Kelaat of Investiture to Saadit Ali in the morning. Mirza Tuckea previous to this had been in the morning with To-fuzzul Hussein Khan, had urged the same arguments, and had promised Forts, Money and Territory to any extent if I would agree to the Begum's proposition in favor of Mirza Jungly. Mirza Tuckea observed to me that if the Begum went to town, he was afraid that Vizier Ali would accompany or follow her. The same intimation, with a view to alarm me & postpone the execution of my determination in favor of Saadit Ali, had been made by Almas in some part of the day, which I do not recollect; they had taken advantage of my apparent anxiety to prevent any Insurrection or plunder in the City.

Information now came, that the Artillery in the Town was drawn out; that the Troops were assembled and that there was every appearance of alarm & opposition. The Begum sent to acquaint me with it, and I advised her to set off as soon as possible as her presence would quiet the Tumult.

About six in the Evening the Begum sent an Eunuch again to tell me she had set out, and an hour after another arrived with a report that he had been sent by his Mistress

(who was then advanced halfway to Town) to Ibrahim Beg to order him to replace the Artillery; that Ibrahim Beg had threatened to beat him, abused him, and disavowed all authority but that of Vizier Ali. He expressed his Mistress's fears, and her wish to return. I had before sent for Ashreef Ali Khan who declared that Ibrahim Beg acted without the orders of the Nabob, and that Vizier Ali had deputed people to him with positive Instructions to him to desist. My answer to the Begum by the Khoja was that as she knew best the temper of Ibrahim Beg, and that of the people of Lucknow, she must judge for herself, that Saadit Ali, at all events would be at Lucknow tomorrow and be happy to receive his Kelaat from the Begum if there, if not, he must regret his disappointment and take his seat on the Musnud without his investiture from the Begum, that I trusted however, her influence would be sufficient to restore Order.

A man from Sherf Ali came in five minutes afterwards with a message from the Nabob expressing his wish to come to me and remain with me, I told him I should be happy to see him.

In the interim I requested General Martin who had a spare Tent, to prepare it for the accommodation of Vizier Ali; from the description which he gave me of it I could scarcely hope it would be fit for his reception.

Vizier Ali arrived and was attended by the Commander in Chief and myself to a room above stairs; he appeared depressed but not disconsolate and exhibited the firmness of resignation rather than the gloom of despair. Our conference was melancholy and more distressing to me than to him. He did not express a wish to remain with me. I insinuated the subject, but the description of the accommodation, and the impossibility of procuring better induced him to express an inclination to return to his own Tent, in which I acquiesced. I endeavoured to sooth and console him, and he left me. It was about 8 o'Clock.

Immediately after his departure the advices of the Mili-

tary Manoeuvres in Town were repeated by various Channels and a Messenger with every appearance of Terror came from the Begum, expressing her Alarms & determination to return, I therefore determined to prevail on Vizier Ali to come back and take possession of the Tent, which, upon further Enquiry, afforded better accommodation than I expected. With this view I once more sent for his Father in Law, Sherf Ali, told him the reports of the Conduct of Ibrahim Beg, in the City, that the whole was imputed to the Nabob, perhaps by his Enemies with a view to ruin him. I apologized for giving the Nabob further trouble, but that the necessity of the case induced me now to request that he would come to me and take up his abode during the night within my Quarters. Sherif Ali engaged for his acquiescence, but instead of going himself, with an indecency which shocked me, sent a Man of his own to call Vizier Ali to me.

The Nabob came, the House was crowded, and he was ushered into a room full of Company; He remained there a quarter of an hour, a distressing object of all, but most so to me. I conversed some time with him and accompanied him to supper. As there was a delay in bringing his victuals, after a quarter of an hour he begged to retire to his Tent, and I attended him to it; it had a Kanaat round it, and was a comfortable Hindostany Tent with a Beecho-bat apartment, but looked gloomy to me, more so to him. I quitted him for the night at about 10 o'Clock with expressions of commiseration and condolence. He declined having any Guards.

The news of Ibrahim Beg's preparations was repeated, but the departure of the Begum for the City at my repeated instances, satisfied me that there was no real ground of apprehension.

In consequence of these reports, however, I dispatched an express to countermand the desire which I had signified to Saadit Ali that he should come in with the Cavalry alone to the Boulu, a place about three Miles from the City, where



I had proposed to meet him, and attend him thence to the Palace. I requested him to stop at Bulla ka Tuckea with all the Troops of his Escort, at the distance of Six Miles.

In the course of this day I dispatched Letters to Abdulrahman Khan, and some others of the Nabob's officers, acquainting them with the determination to place Saadit Ali on the Musnud, and availing myself of the Begum's name and declarations against Vizier Ali. I received an Answer in the course of the night from Abdulrahman expressive of his Allegiance to his new Master.

I have cursorily mentioned the alarming Reports during the day, there was not half an hour free from them after 2 o'Clock. They appeared to me calculated for intimidation, and from circumstances I suspected them to originate in the intrigues of the Begum. On this suspicion I acted & relied.

21st January.

The reports of the Military Preparations at the City in the morning were not more favourable, and everything seemed to threaten opposition. Without suffering my resolution to be changed or suspended in consequence, and still retaining my opinion that no opposition would be made, I thought it advisable to take the same precautions as if it were certain, and recommended to the Commander in Chief to make his military arrangements accordingly. I dispatched a Messenger to Saadit Ali requesting him to meet me at a spot which I named between Bebeepore and the City for reasons to be hereafter explained, and I immediately ordered the Ministers to publish the Proclamation of Saadit Ali Khan in the City. Almas came in about 9 o'Clock, I told him I was sorry that the Begum's influence had not been able to check Ibrahim Beg's conduct, that as Ibrahim Beg acted without controul, in opposition to the orders both of the Begum and Vizier Ali, that I should order the Company's Troops to march into the City, and punish his contumacy or resistance, and I wrote to the Begum to the

same purport, informing her that Saadit Ali would nevertheless march into the City and be seated on the Musnud, and I desired Almas to beg she would not be alarmed at the approach of the Troops, as they would protect the City, and molest none if unopposed. Almas is generally believed to be a Coward, and the Language with the tone of my voice & mode of expression had an immediate effect upon him. The two Commandants of the Nabob who had voluntarily made Engagements to the Minister, had the preceding day renewed their offers, and this morning attended me. In less than half an hour after my communication with Almas, and before the dispatch of my Letter to the Begum, I received one from her by Almas announcing the replacement of the Artillery and the restoration of Quiet, and claiming merit to herself or her exertions during the night in effecting this. I replied to the Begum's Letter with great Civility: but the Troops were ordered, however to march near the City, to be ready for any event. I had reason to believe that the Begum had employed but little exertion during the night to quell the disturbance, on the contrary, that she had a separate Consultation with Mirza Jungly, and other Confidants until 3 o'Clock in the Morning.

The above intelligence from the Begum was soon confirmed by other channels and I immediately ordered Tesheen Ali Khan, to go to the palace, turn out all the Troops, and prepare it for the reception of the Nabob.

About 11 o'Clock I learnt that Saadit Ali was on his march with the Cavalry only from Bulla ka Tuckea. I went to Vizier Ali, took leave of him, repeated my promises, and then mounted my Elephant to proceed and meet Saadit Ali. When we arrived on the destined place of meeting, I heard that he had advanced to the first place of appointment the Boulou, I here received answers to my Letters to Ibrahim Beg & his brother, expressing their unbounded delight at the accession of the rightful Heir to the Musnud, and dispatched Messengers to the Nabob requesting him to

advance without delay. After waiting half an hour, Messengers came and announced the Nabob's approach. Almas attended me to the spot but was absent before Saadit Ali arrived. He had departed without any communication to me and various surmises were entertained of his motives. About One o'Clock Saadit Ali joined us, and after five Minutes passed in civilities & salutations, we ascended the same Elephant & proceeded to the City. In the way I procured a Bag of Rupees which we both distributed to the people; we were attended by a Regiment of Sepoys and Cavalry. Almas met the Nabob when he was in the City on his way to the Begum's Palace, dismounted & presented his Nuzzer.

The crowd was beyond all calculation, and their numbers obstructed our approach. No other obstruction occurred. We stopped at the Palace of the Begum. The Nabob was ushered into her presence, received his Kelaat of Investiture, & we then repaired to the Palace, and between three and four o'Clock Saadit Ali was placed on the Musnud by the Commander in Chief and myself.

In our way I gave him that advice which I deemed necessary for his Conduct and in the shortest possible Terms. The presence of a Man in the Kowas and of the Elephant Driver prevented much confidential Conversation. I referred him to Tofuzzul Hussein Khan for further Instructions.

After sitting an hour with the Nabob I took leave of him, a body of the Company's Troops were left in the palace for his protection.

I consider it as most providential that no disturbance took place amongst the hundreds who participated the Bounties of Vizier Ali, it might have occasioned massacre and plunder. One accident only happened, the cause of which is not ascertained. A man whether mad or desperate discharged a pistol apparently at Rajah Tickait Bai, & immediately drew his sword & attacked the Company's Troops. They kept him off some time, but his desperation

compelled them to destroy him with their Bayonets. It is most probable that the Man was mad.

The Nabob Saadit Ali Khan, harrassed with a Journey of forty continued Hours, from Benares to Khanpore, expressed much alarm and anxiety before he joined me. On the Elephant he deemed himself secure and appeared collected. My motive in desiring him to proceed on the same Elephant with myself was to give him confidence, & mark union & determination. As far as I could judge of the opinion of the people by their behaviour & countenances, they were well pleased at his appearance. They were all rejoiced at my return to Lucknow, and at the encampment of the Troops near it, considering themselves then in security.

Vizier Ali, at my proposal, immediately occupied the House at Bebiepore when I quitted it. From the Terrace he saw the march of the Troops & our advance towards the Town. He was almost deserted, and without the assistance of the English who remained at Bebiepore, would not have found servants to prepare the House for his reception, although I had taken precautions for his accommodation & good treatment.

In tracing the progress of this Revolution, it is to be remarked that Saadit Ali was absent from Benares, and did not return there until the 2d of January; that I had no communication or correspondence with him in the interval excepting the Letter which I wrote to him from Juanpore; that he was wholly ignorant of the investigation which I was prosecuting, and of his interest in the result of it until the 11th or 12th of January, when the first communication was made to him on the subject by the Agent at Benares; that he was ignorant of the means adopted for his arrival at Lucknow, until they were notified to him a few Hours before his actual departure from Benares. To me, the interval preceding my decision in his favor was a period of great doubt & anxiety, nor was my anxiety much diminished until his arrival at Khanpore.

The failure of the Post, the interception of my Letters, any irresolution on his part, or accident during his Journey to Khanpore, by the way of Allahabad might have involved me in great Embarrassment.<sup>1</sup> As it was, I still had a difficult task to amuse all parties, so as to prevent the discovery of my plans; and if I succeeded in accomplishing this point I have the satisfaction to affirm that I practised no Treachery, nor made any promises which I did not fulfil. The proclamation of Saadit Ali was a surprize to all, who were not in my Confidence.

But, above all, I owe unbounded gratitude to Providence for enabling me to effect so great a Revolution without the Loss of Lives. It was the opinion of many that the desperate Crew who surrounded the Nabob would have instigated him to some act of desperation; assassination, contempt of the English and the power of Vizier Ali to resist were common Topics of conversation among them, and independantly of these, there were others ready to avail themselves of any confusion to plunder the Town. The Vackeel of Ambagee, a Mahratta Chieftain, who arrived at Lucknow about the 15th of the month, had an opportunity of learning the projects which some of the Ruffians who had experienced the bounty of Vizier Ali, had formed to raise a Commotion plunder the City, and retire with their spoils to the Mahratta Frontiers. They were heard to remark that if a single shot were fired it would be sufficient, and thousands would have been sacrificed. Every street in Lucknow was filled with armed Men, and the accumulation of them on the 19th & 20th was observed by several Europeans. During the three & four days succeeding the 21st great Numbers were seen departing from the Town and passing the English Camp at Bulla ka Tuckea about eight miles from it, to the Districts from which they had been summoned. The consequences of an armed opposition in such a Town as Lucknow would have been shocking; it is

<sup>1</sup> The last few paragraphs of this document are printed in Shore Corr., I, 444 ff.

computed to contain 800,000 Inhabitants, and the Streets are for the most part narrow Lanes and passages. The Artillery under Ibrahim Beg consisted of about 300 pieces of Ordnance, of which Sixty or Seventy were fit for immediate use; they were served by about 1000 Golandauzes, or Native Artillery men, and the number of Artillery drawn out for opposition consisted of thirty pieces of Cannon, so posted that it was impossible to seize them without great slaughter. Ibrahim Beg, the Commandant, was a violent, hot-headed Mogul, regardless of any authority, fearless of his own Life, and careless of the Lives of others. The single accident which did happen, had, in all probability no connection with the Revolution.

## APPENDIX D

### LETTERS EXCHANGED BETWEEN HENRY DUNDAS AND LORD HOBART, GOVERNOR OF MADRAS, CONCERNING THE LATTER'S DIFFERENCES WITH SIR JOHN SHORE

(a)

Henry Dundas to Lord Hobart, August 29, 1796.<sup>1</sup>

My dear Lord:

My chief reason for writing you at present is the very unpleasant letters I have lately received from you respecting yourself. Your expressions are so peremptory with regard to your intention of returning if Sir John Shore is not brought away that, after thinking much upon it, I did not feel myself at liberty to act upon the belief that you would not keep to that resolution and therefore although I did not advise the appointing even a provisional successor, I have taken care that, in the event of your coming away the Government shall not fall into the hands of whoever may happen to be the next in Council. Having done what I conceive to be my duty, I shall now proceed, without reserve, to state to you my opinion upon the resolution itself that if you should take so ill-advised a step, I may have nothing to reproach myself with in having omitted to take every means which private friendship for yourself and attention to the public interests dictated upon such an occasion. I believe I may venture to assure you that if you do take such a step, you will stand single in your opinion with regard to the propriety of it, and will not have the satisfaction to feel that those who regard you most will accord with your judgment in the step you have taken.

<sup>1</sup> Melville MSS. in the possession of Violet, Viscountess Melville, at Eskbank "Grange," Midlothian.

In the first place, my dear lord, I feel it my duty in justice to the Department of Government committed to my charge, to protest against the right of Governors appointed to distant and important situations to relinquish them at pleasure. The opinion of the government under which they act ought not to be overlooked on such a point. The public interest may often, and in the present case would most certainly suffer from such an abrupt change in its foreign rulers, and no individual who has accepted such a situation is entitled to consult his own judgment or feelings solely in the relinquishment of it. This however is not the topic I mean much to enlarge upon. I desire to [speak to] the substance of the resolution itself. I admit perfectly that, previous to your sailing you had justly a right to confide in the assurances of Government that no person would be put over you in the Government of India. If my recollection does not fail me, I think I am correct in admitting that from the state of Sir John Shore's health and spirits, it was probable that he would not stand long in your way of going to Bengal; but I am positive this was not thought the circumstance most to be wished for in your appointment to Madras. I remember well that Lord Cornwallis and myself often regretted that you would probably be leaving Madras before everything was arranged and put into a state of regularity at that settlement. Your own account of the situation in which the Carnatic now is, certainly does not tend to diminish that opinion. With that sentiment in my breast, it certainly never could be a wish of mine, nor do I think your Lordship even states it as a wish of your own at that moment, that Sir John Shore should at an early period leave the Government of Bengal. I cannot state more strongly my feeling on this point than by distinctly stating to you that, if no such unfortunate differences had occurred as these which too strongly agitate your mind and if Sir John Shore's day of departure had been fixt, I should have felt it my duty for the sake of India in general and of the Carnatic in particular to have used every means in



my power to prevent any change in the respective governments at the critical period in which we now are both at home and abroad. In so far therefore as any part of your letters express a regret that Sir John Shore has not left Bengal, or that you have not been enabled to leave Madras, it is impossible for me to concur with you in that feeling. The opposite is my decided sentiment on the subject.

I trust you will give me credit when I assure you that in the consideration of this subject I have not omitted minutely to examine every circumstance which seems to have given you uneasiness and I have not trusted to myself only in this examination, but have likewise caused the whole to be examined by Mr. Pitt and Lord Mornington. I have likewise seen your friend Mr. Sullivan and to him have submitted every circumstance which has operated on my judgment. I have likewise recently had a conversation with Lord Cornwallis to whom I find you had likewise wrote and who tells me he has wrote to you. All your letters state a conviction that Sir John Shore is hostilely disposed toward you, that he does not wish to maintain your credit, and is rather disposed to detract from the merit you have manifested in the critical situation you are placed. As to most of those opinions you have not laid before me the grounds of them and of course have not furnished me the means of examining them. In so far as you have produced the foundations on which you entertain those feelings, I have examined them attentively, but cannot bring myself to concur with you in the sentiments you express. It is my sincere opinion, my dear Lord, that you are laboring under an undue prejudice. I do not say this on light grounds. I would not rest that opinion solely on public dispatches, but I have made it my business through his most confidential friends in the country to have access to his most private correspondence, and there is not to be discovered in any one of them the vestige of those sentiments and dispositions which you have been induced to impute to him; the reverse appears from them. He talks of you in high terms of ap-

probation and good opinion, he expresses his opinion how likely you are to prove in your future situation an able and upright Governor of India. In one or two letters, he adverts to your being intemperate and not feeling exactly as he would wish towards him. But this he mentions more as a subject of regret as depriving him of the pleasure of those confidential communications with you which he would wish and by which he conceives the public interests would be benefited; but in no part is there to be discovered that spirit which you are induced to suppose him to be actuated by. I cannot dwell on every circumstance, but the result of the whole is a conviction in my own mind that wherever he differs from you in opinion or wherever he exercises that right of Controul over your measures which his situation and the authority under which you both act entitle him to do, he does not do it from any feeling of caprice or bad humour toward you but from a conscientious feeling of duty, free from the smallest mixture of personal rancour or animosity. I must therefore conclude with giving you my decided opinion that I think you unfounded in the conceptions you have formed with regard to Sir John Shore, and consequently in urging you to remain some time longer where you are I am urging you to do nothing incompatible with your honor or that ought to injure your nicest feelings. On the other hand let me entreat you for a moment to view with candor the other side of the question. Sir John Shore has, during a long period of public life, acted in such a manner as a servant of the East India Company as to have obtained their opinion and the opinion of their best servants highly favorable both to his talents and integrity. I mention in a particular manner the sentiments of Lord Cornwallis who has had much occasion to act with him and to know him, and upon my recently putting the question to him he declares that he believes him totally incapable of any mean or dishonorable act and considers him to be a most able and upright servant of the Public. When they were in Government they have differed on most

essential subjects, but he never had to impute to him anything that was not perfectly honorable and upright. Upon those grounds, I feel I could not recall Sir John Shore without doing him an essential injury and lessening in his person that confidence of support with which I wish all foreign governors acting under me to look up to me. Allow me further to state that I doubt if the Court of Directors would be induced to do it and if I was to recall him in an offensive way by the King's authority without their consent, the consequence would be that you or any other successor would have a most uncomfortable situation to act in and the Government of India would for years be kept in a state of distraction by jealousy and contention between the Court of Directors and Board of Controul. All that, and much more, I would undergo if I was called upon to do it in justice to you, or to protect you from any injury you had suffered or was likely to suffer; but I have already explained to you that upon a thorough examination of the whole subject, I cannot find a circumstance or the trace of a circumstance to enable me to view it in that light.

I have troubled you, my dear Lord, with a long letter, but in doing so I have discharged my duty to the public and at the same time have given the most unequivocal proof of my private friendship for you and I conclude in the most perfect confidence that whatever opinion you may now form or whatever conclusion you may come to upon the whole business, you will one day feel as I wish you to do upon the subject. I have only most earnestly to entreat you that you will not allow that day to arrive when it is too late to produce the good consequences which it may now do, if you act that part which your best friends wish and which I am positive, your truest honor ought to dictate.

Believe me with sincere regard,

My dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

Henry Dundas

(b)

Lord Hobart to Henry Dundas.

FORT ST. GEORGE  
Dec'r 15th, 1796*Private*

My Dear Sir

I had the honour the day before Yesterday of receiving your letter of the 29th of August accompanied by Copies of Paragraphs which form a part of a General letter transmitted by a Sea Conveyance, as also copies of letters to the Nabob of Arcot & Rajah of Tanjore.

The candid unreserv'd & friendly manner in which you have convey'd your private sentiments, & the satisfactory result of your official deliberations demand my warmest acknowledgments, and decide upon my continuance in India whether Sir John Shore shall leave it or not.

I do not however relinquish the principle upon which I have acted, or the propriety of my former determination to go to Europe under the circumstances by which it was govern'd.

I am ready to acknowledge the justice of your observation that Governors appointed to distant situations are not at liberty to relinquish them at pleasure, & I have incontrovertibly prov'd, that my practice has been conformable to that Principle, because I now hold the office of Governor of Madras, & I might venture to defy you or any other man to produce an instance, where more circumstances combin'd to put that Principle to the test than united to urge me to a resignation at the period of my being ordered to annul the treaty with the Rajah of Tanjore.

Having said thus much permit me to add that if a Governor of Madras shall discover a determination in the Governor General of India to endeavour to depreciate & degrade him, & to cast a stigma upon every measure which an anxiety to promote the public Service may induce him to adopt, if

he conceives that instead of a conscientious discharge of his Duty, the Governor General is actuated by an unwarrantable prejudice, heated into a rancorous animosity, his Character cannot be out of danger whilst he remains under his Authority, nor indeed can the public concerns be beneficially administerd, & it in that case appears to me an indispensable duty in a Governor of Madras to request that a less obnoxious Individual may supply his place, altho' it is equally incumbent on him to retain it, until ample time shall have been allow'd for his being reliev'd.

The question is whether I was so circumstanc'd or not, & I must declare notwithstanding the high authority on which you have stated your opinion to the contrary, that since the hour that I differd from Sir John Shore upon the subject of furnishing the Nizams Army with British officers, his Public conduct has been invariably govern'd by a hostile disposition towards me, occasionally cloak'd under an appearance of Plausibility, but which for these last twelve months has been progressively showing itself, until at length it has become conspicuous to every man in India.

In my letter of the 10th of Sep'r, 1795 I told you, "That he (Sir John Shore) had plausibility to approve where he could not do otherwise, & that he would snatch every opportunity to condemn that might be presented to him."

Reflect upon his conduct on the subject of the Candian Embassy, the Dutch Expeditions, the Nabob of Arcot, & Rajah of Tanjore, & see if it is possible for you to persevere in the opinion that "*I am labouring under an undue Prejudice.*"

I am perfectly ready to concur with you as to the general favourable impression of Sir John Shore's Character both in point of Talents & Integrity previous to your recommending that he should be sent to India to succeed to Lord Cornwallis, & it is the dread of the influence of that Character, & the application of those Talents directed against me that has excited such serious apprehensions in my mind.

Upon this occasion I shall make no observations upon that part of your letter which relates to the expectations with which I left Europe, whatever they might have been can be of little consequence under existing circumstances.

In approving of every important measure which I have taken, you have raised me from that dust in which I had been laid by Sir John Shore, & as you have thereby restored in a great degree the energy & authority of my Government, I should ill requite so flattering a testimony of your approbation, if I did not relinquish my intention of leaving India as I had proposed at the beginning of the Year, & more especially as you so strongly urge my continuance on the ground of Public Utility, but I must desire you would understand the full weight of the Sacrifice I am making in remaining at a place where every hour reminds me of objects which have been too dear to me ever to lose their sad impression, & which must render it of all situations that which is most poignantly distressing to my feelings.

From the manner in which you have discussed the subject of recalling Sir John Shore, it is necessary that I should trouble you with a few remarks in my own justification.

Had I supposed that you would be under all the difficulties you have stated in the event of your deeming it advisable to recall Sir John Shore, I should not have had the presumption to believe that I could be of sufficient weight in the Political scale to induce you to hazard the consequences of such a measure, but the truth is I did not imagine these difficulties would have occurred, because I had conceived the specific terms on which Sir John Shore had been sent to India were such as to have left you at perfect liberty to desire him to return whenever you pleased & that an intimation from you to that effect at any period of his Government would not "*have lessened in his person that confidence of support with which you wish all foreign Governors acting under you to look up.*"

A Conviction of the Manliness of your Character, & a

Confidence in your friendship satisfy me that if you had seen Sir John Shore's conduct in the same light which I do, you would have afforded me your protection at all hazards, viewing it so differently I could not expect that you should act otherwise than you have done, but I shall look with no small anxiety for the impression which subsequent events may have made upon you.

The diabolical libels containd in the Governor General's letters respecting my conduct with regard to the Nabob, & the Rajah of Tanjore speak a language too plain to be misunderstood & whatever his private letters to his friends in the direction, or in the India House may have said, the object of them I have no doubt has been uniform.—To impress a belief that he felt no animosity towards me for the purpose of giving the greater weight to his deliberate censures upon my public Conduct.

I never yet knew a man who was possessed of sufficient candour to acknowledge even to his nearest friend, that he was jealous, envious, & vindictive.

I consider your appointment of General Clarke to take charge of this government in the event of my going away, as a mark of very great kindness, & I am gratefull for it as I ought to be.

My Letters certainly could not have justified your acting upon the belief that I should not have kept to my resolution, & I indisputably should have done so, (unless the Posture of affairs had made it impracticable) had you not elevated me from that degraded situation to which I had been hurled by Sir John Shore; but you have now placed me out of his reach, & altho' the interests of the Company & my own especial duty must prevent my ever forgetting that I am subordinate to him, I shall despise any future efforts that he may make to lower me in the estimation of the Public.

Having about two months ago apprized Sir John Shore that I should leave India if he did not by the Ships of this Season, & being informd by him it was his wish & intention

to go provided no contingency should impose the necessity of his remaining, but that his final resolution should be communicated in the course of the month of December, I yesterday signified to him that his quitting or remaining in the Supreme Government would make no change in the determination I had then formd to continue in India.

As long before this letter can reach you the whole of Sir John Shore's conduct will be completely before you with all its embarrassing consequences, I shall think you must have an unconquerable indisposition to my becoming Governor General, if you can bring yourself to allow of his continuance at the head of affairs in this Country.

I shall make every exertion in the execution of your orders respecting the renewal of the Treaty with the Nabob, but he has been so buoy'd up by the Support, & Courtship he has met with from the Governor General, that I am afraid I shall scarcely make an impression upon him.

The Tanjore business I fear is involv'd in inextricable difficulty.

It has been so completely taken out of my hands that I cannot stir in it without instructions from Bengal, & as pertinacity is one of the Qualities for which Sir John Shore is peculiarly distinguish'd, I do not expect that he will suffer me to act with that decision which the case absolutely requires.

Upon that as upon every other subject affecting the interests of the Company, be assur'd of my most strenuous endeavours to promote the public Service, & that whatever I may feel you will never trace an atom of personal dissatisfaction in any measure of my Government.

I have the honour to be

My Dear Sir

With the truest regard & gratitude

Yours most Sincerely,

Hobart

P.S.

The capture of the Dutch Fleet at Saldahna, the prob-



able satisfactory settlement of the differences at Poonah, & the expected return of Azim ul Omrah to Hydrabad promise a continuance of tranquility in India.<sup>1</sup>

P.S. Jan'y 4th, 1797

I have had a long interview with the Nabob on the subject of the late orders. He desires time for consideration, but I fear will do nothing, tho' he is evidently alarmed at his situation & the conviction he now feels that the Protection of the Supreme Government cannot long save him from the necessity of attending to the pecuniary claims of the Company.

(c)

Lord Hobart to Henry Dundas

FORT ST. GEORGE  
Jany. 20th, 1797

*Private*

My Dear Sir

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit copy of my letter to you of the 13th ulto., & to acquaint you of my having receiv'd your letters of the 14th of May, & 6th of June.

The former by Mr. Johnston, the latter by the Indianmen of the Third Division.

Altho' I thought it likely that Sir John Shore would pertinaciously adhere to that line of conduct which he has heretofore observ'd upon all measures respecting the Nabob of Arcot & Rajah of Tanjore I could not help indulging a distant hope that the deplorable situation to which the Tanjore Country must inevitably be reduc'd would have made some impression upon his mind, & that the exercise of the common feelings of humanity (exclusively of those considerations which the welfare of the Company might have suggested) sanctioned by the instructions of the Court of Directors would have mitigated the operation of his

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, pp. 107, 112.

personal resentment against me, & that even at the expense of restoring a small portion of the authority of my Government he would have been induc'd at least to suffer an attempt to be made to avert that distress in which the unfortunate inhabitants of Tanjore must be involv'd by the rapacity of those who now have no expectation of the period of their power over the country continuing beyond a few months.

I must however acknowledge that consistently with his former resolutions Sir John Shore could not have authoriz'd a measure leading to the resumption of their districts, & therefore as he had repeatedly expressd a wish & intention to go to Europe this Season (the sincerity of which I always doubted) he ought to have left the business in my hands, for thank God my consistency does not shackle me with a difficulty upon any measure connected with the dictates of humanity or the advancement of these interests I have undertaken to use my best ability to promote.

The inflexibility of Sir John Shore upon points where he thinks himself committed holds out rather a discouraging prospect.

Sir John Shore is pledg'd to make concessions to a mutinous Army.

Sir John Shore is pledgd to support the Nabob of Arcot, & Rajah of Tanjore against the Governor of Fort St. George, & to forward the views of those who in defiance of the repeated orders of Government, & the Character of Gentlemen are concerned in the most nefarious scenes of Usury & Extortion.

Sir John Shore is pledgd to a line of conduct with respect to the Native powers by which he has already nearly extinguishd the Political Influence of the English Nation in India.

Sir John Shore became pledgd against the Treaty with the King of Candia, because the heads of the Factory at Chinsura persuaded him that it would awaken the resent-

ment of the Dutch on whose possessions we were then making a hostile attack.

Sir John Shore, proud of his principle that "What is morally wrong cannot be politically right" is pledg'd in the event of a contest to support the younger Brother against the rights of the elder to the Paishwaship.

Sir John Shore is pledgd to the opinion, that insisting on the discharge of an undisputed debt, with a view to effect certain Political objects dictated by sound Policy humanity & Justice is calculated to excite reflections that might have a tendency to subvert the British power in India.

Sir John Shore is pledgd to stock the Nizam's army with British officers.

I have heard too, but not with sufficient accuracy to state it, that Sir John Shore is pledg'd & unpledgd upon the subject of Oude as disgracefully to himself as injuriously to the honor of his Government.

Another pledge which he has given, tho' not publicly, is to depreciate & lower me upon all occasions, & as by the accomplishment of my plan for the consolidation of this Government I should certainly have obtained the approbation & thanks of the Company he has exerted every effort (with a due attention to his own safety) to counteract it; a Design in which it was impossible for him to fail, considering all the difficulties with which it was surrounded, & all the weight belonging to his exalted station.

His late orders on the subject of Tanjore were looked for with no small anxiety by the Nabob, & their promulgation which soon happened from the correspondence carried on by those interested in the business, & their friends in Bengal was the signal to him to disclose his ultimate decision upon the renewd negotiation,—

"To stand upon the narrowest construction of the Treaty of 1792."

For my further sentiments upon the subject I must refer you to the Official Letters by this dispatch as well as to my

former voluminous communications; Should I have fail'd in convincing you of the necessity & expediency of taking strong measures, I may well say "Liberavi animam meam" & I shall quit the pursuit with a consciousness of having completely discharg'd my Duty to the Company & the British Government.

In my letter of the 13th ulto. I signified my determination to remain in India, & notwithstanding the ground of that determination has been so much weakend by the conduct of the Governor General in consequence of the late dispatches I shall certainly keep my word with you, but I am persuaded you must now see the necessity of deciding whether Sir John Shore or I am to leave India.

It is impossible for us both to remain, for as you justly observe that "a Jarring between the Governments of Bengal & Madras has never occur'd without being attended with the most pernicious consequences to the Public Interests," & altho' I may refer to the official records as a proof that differences between the present Governments (wide as they are) have hitherto rather had the effect of animating than restraining my exertions, it is impossible that the "Public interests" can be safe under such circumstances, and whilst I feel that Sir John Shore is forever on the watch to ruin my Character (of which no authority you can quote will convince me to the contrary) I have not sufficient confidence in myself to believe that such an impression will not imperceptibly affect my conduct, notwithstanding every resolution I may form to guard against it.

If the Court of Directors are so bigotted to Sir John Shore, as to put it out of your power (supposing you to wish it which by the by I am not warranted to conjecture) to manage his recall, his Influence must overwhelm me if I remain in India, & I cannot hazard the consequences, but if you could have sent Lord Guilford<sup>1</sup> to Bengal when I

<sup>1</sup> George Augustus North, 1757-1802, 3rd Earl of Guilford; refused the governor-generalship. See Malmesbury, Earl of, (James Harris) *Diaries and Correspondence*, II, 469, 472; also *D.N.B.*, article on Frederick North, 2nd Earl of Guilford, better known as Lord North.

carried a proposition from you to him for that purpose, I should imagine you could effect my immediate succession without difficulty, & having Sir John Shore's authority, which in this instance I give credit to, for saying that you are apprized of his readiness to go home whenever it is judgd advisable to vacate the supreme Government, I should suppose no real obstacle can occur.

I have weigh'd all your arguments over & over again, & I need not say how much I respect them, strengthend as they are by the opinions of those with whom you acquaint me you had consulted, but I must have been egregiously mistaken in the opinion I had formd of Mr. Pitt if I can be brought to think that being convinc'd that my immediate superiors (& at this distance from Europe) were determin'd to counteract my measures, & degrade my Character, he would advise me to remain in Office.

In continuing here until a reasonable time has been allowed for you to reply to this letter I do all that ought to be expected from me, & much more than I can perfectly reconcile to my own feelings.

You tell me that "you would undergo a great deal if you was calld upon to do it in justice to me or to protect me from any injury I had either suffer'd or was likely to suffer."

I will not put you to the test. I should deprecate any efforts you made in my favour, that were inconsistent with the great object of your political life "The interests of British India."

If these important interests are to be promoted by Sir John Shore's continuance at the head of them, for Gods sake, let him stay, but as I am most thoroughly convinced that their advancement & my own honour will not admit of us both remaining in this Country, either his departure or mine is inevitable.

My only wish is that the question should be decided upon public grounds, & I have one personal & urgent favour to ask from your friendship, & through you I must call upon

Mr. Pitt's friendship also to this single point, *that the question may be determin'd on the receipt of this letter.*

There are no consequences that can possibly result from a decision against me, half so dangerous to all my future prospects as that decision being delayed.

I know the trials that I shall have to meet in the mean time, & I trust you will not hazard my being the sacrifice of those artifices which will endeavour to hurry me into a measure which must inevitably meet with your disapprobation.

Mr. Johnston shall have all the assistance I can give him consistently with my Duty. Mr. Adderley attended him to the Nabob as you desir'd.

I have receivd several letters of recommendation from you, to all of which you may be assur'd of my particular attention.

Colonel Dugald Compbell has been so good as to take charge of this letter, he is a very deserving officer, & most worthy man.

I have the honour to be

My Dear Sir

Most sincerely yours

Hobart

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